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Iranian 1st Vice-President to Officially Visit Tajikistan

DUSHANBE — First Vice-President Hassan Habibi is to leave Tehran for Tajikistan on December 29 on an official visit, said Iranian Ambassador to Tajikistan Seyed Rasoul Mousavi in an interview with reporters here on Monday.

Mousavi said the goal behind the visit was to expand Tehran-Dushanbe economic and commercial relations, improve bilateral cooperation at international fora and promote bilateral political and cultural ties.

Tajik President Imomali Rakhmonov has visited Iran twice so far. (IRNA)

Syria Urges Palestinians to End Talks With Israelis

DAMASCUS — The official Syrian press on Monday called on Arabs and the international community to exert more pressure against Israel and urged the Palestinians to stop negotiating with the Zionist state.

"Arabs must set an example against Israel's intransigence by taking specific measures such as cancelling the normalization (of relations) with Israel by some (countries) and stopping negotiations between the Palestinians and the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu," Tishrin said. (Contd on Pg.14)

Oman Blames Israel for Deadlock in Middle East Peace Process

MUSCAT — Oman on Monday blamed Israel for the deadlock in the Middle East peace process and said it would maintain a freeze on official contacts with the Zionist regime.

"We took our decision (to freeze official ties) and we will continue to do so until Israel changes its current policy," Oman's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yussef ibn Alawi Abdallah said.

He was speaking during a joint press conference with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa.

Oman announced on December 4 it was freezing steps toward normalizing ties with Israel after criticizing the hardline policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Oman and Qatar are the only Persian Gulf Arab states to have begun normalizing ties with Israel by agreeing to open trade missions earlier in the year.

"The sultanate does not accept that Israel disengage from the peace accords it has signed, whatever the pretext," Ibn Alawi said. "All the justifications given by Israel on the deadlock in negotiations with the Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon are unacceptable."

Mussa said that his country "could help the peace process go forward in the respect of the terms of the Madrid Conference (in 1991) and the concluded agreements" between Israel and the Palestinians.

Mussa, who led Egypt's delegation to the high joint Egypt-Oman committee, met with Sultan Qaboos earlier and was to return to Cairo later in the day. (AFP)

Rafsanjani to Leave for Turkey Thursday

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani is to leave here for Ankara, Turkey, on Thursday to discuss issues of mutual interest and key regional and international developments with the Turkish officials.

The visit aims at promoting Tehran-Ankara relations within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

The two countries are the founding members of the Eco- (Contd on Pg.14)

Turkey, Iran, Pakistan to Seek to Settle Afghan War

ANKARA — The foreign ministers of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan will meet here in January to discuss ways for an end to the civil war in Afghanistan, Turkish diplomats said Monday.

"A tripartite meeting of foreign ministers of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan is expected in early January," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Omer Akbel told reporters.

"The aim is to persuade the warring parties to accept a peaceful solution," Akbel said.

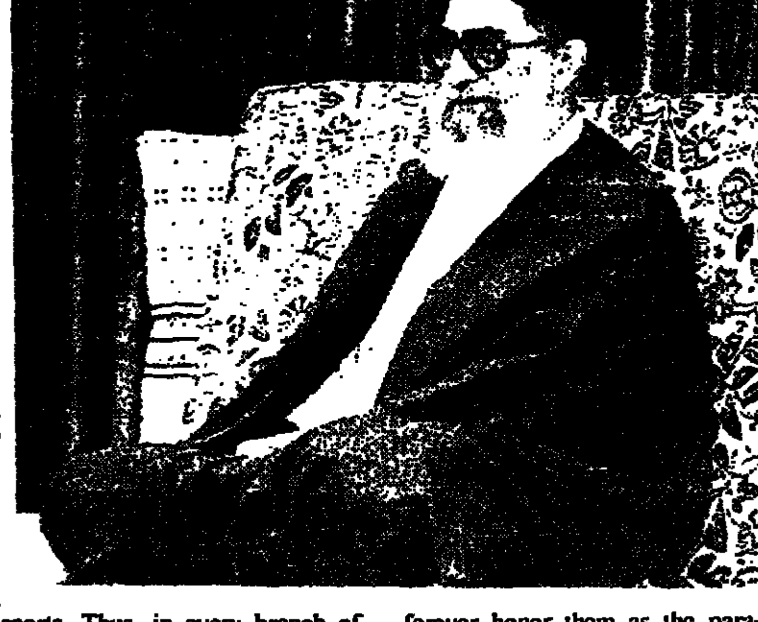
The Taleban militia gained control of the Afghan capital of Kabul from the forces of President Burhanuddin Rabbani in September. However, fierce fighting between Taleban and a United Opposition Front is continuing.

Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostam, another influential figure of ethnic Turkic origin who has been fighting the Taleban, has close ties with Turkey.

Turkey and Iran said they would support the setting up of a broad-based government that would put an end to the Afghan civil war. (AFP)

Leader: War-Disabled Veterans Reminiscent of Greatest National Trial

Tehran Times Service


Photo: Kaveh Ahmadi

TEHRAN — The Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, addressing a group of model war-disabled veterans here yesterday, considered them a blessing of the Islamic Revolution and underlined that the Iranian nation should be further aware of their status and worth. The Leader noted that the war-disabled veterans are reminiscent of the greatest national trial which the Iranian nation has ever undergone.

At the meeting, which was held on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Hazrat Ab al-Fazl al-Abbas (AS), the son of Imam Ali (AS), and also the War-Disabled Day, the grand ayatollah further stated that the Iranian war-disabled veterans overcame their most serious physical weaknesses through their strong will and determination.

The Leader also called the war-disabled veterans appropriate models deserving to be imitated by dedicated Iranian people, particularly the youth "The war-disabled veterans utilized their great spiritual and bodily potential which they were endowed with by the Almighty God and performed miracles in different areas of scientific activities, management and sports. Thus, in every branch of activity, they set an example for the youth of the country," he added.

Elsewhere in his address, the grand ayatollah described the war-disabled veterans as reminiscent of the glorious era of the Iranian nation's sacred defense during the imposed war. "The war-disabled veterans will always remind the Iranian people of their great national trial and the nation should forever honor them as the paragons of resistence," he noted.

Ayatollah Khamenei concluded by viewing the status of the war-disabled veterans as equal to that of the martyrs. The Leader underlined that a war-disabled veteran is a live martyr who will attain even a higher status if he undertakes different social tasks with the same devotion and commitment as in the course of the sacred defense.

Erbakan: Tehran, Ankara Relations Will Be Upgraded in All Levels

ANKARA — Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan said here Sunday night that Tehran-Ankara relations will be further promoted in all areas.


IRNA.

In an exclusive interview with IRNA correspondent here, he added that the agreement concluded between the two countries on purchase of Iranian gas by Turkey is aimed at boosting bilateral relations and that no third party has the right to criticize it.

The trade volume between Turkey and Iran will be increased to $2.5 billion in 1997, he said.

The Turkish prime minister further added that Tehran and Ankara will also upgrade cooperation in regional organizations such as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Economic and Trade Cooperation Committee of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the proposed Group-8 of the Islamic countries.

On baseless claims of West against Iran and Turkey on violation of human rights, he said the worst cases of human rights violations are taking place in the West. Erbakan added that the West with the aim to halt progress and find an excuse to impose economic sanctions on Iran has been resorting to such fabricated claims. In fact, they have political and ideological objectives, he told IRNA.

The Turkish prime minister underlined the need to protect territorial integrity of Iraq and establish peace and stability in the whole region. He added that all Iraqis must live in peace and tranquility in their country.

Erbakan described Turkey and Iran as two brotherly nations and added that this is in the interest of the world community.

Commenting on the agreement signed by Turkey and Israel, Prime Minister Erbakan said that the agreement is a commercial one and should not be interpreted as a strategic accord.

Turning to U.S. opposition to expansion of Tehran-Ankara ties and the agreement on transfer of Iran's gas to Turkey, the Turkish prime minister said that strengthening relations between Iran and Turkey is not only to the interest of the two countries and the region but is of importance to the whole world.

Turkey needs energy resources and through Iran it can meet its needs, said Erbakan expressing hope that Iran's gas would be transferred to Turkey within the next year.

Turkey intends to transfer Iran's gas to the cities of Van and Agri from two directions, he told IRNA. The gas will be transferred from Van in eastern Turkey to Diyarbakir, in southeast Turkey, and the second route from Agri in east to Ankara through Erzurum and Sivas.

The project will become operational in eastern Turkey within a year but construction of pipeline to transfer the gas to Diyarbakir and Ankara will take two to three years.

Erbakan said the two neighboring countries cooperate in three regional organizations, namely the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Permanent Committee of Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the proposed G-8 of the developing countries.

The eight developing countries will form a grouping to help (Contd on Pg. 2)


Photo: Abbas Kowsari

Iran Bounces S. Korea Out of Asian Cup, 6-2

Tehran Times Service

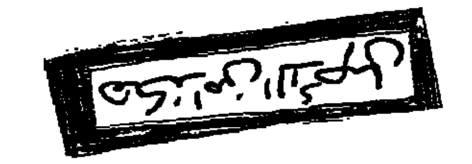
TEHRAN — Scoring six goals in Dubai's Al-Maktum Stadium, Iran advanced yesterday to the semifinals of the 11th round of Asian Cup. The victory set up a semifinal meeting with Saudi Arabia. In the 30th minute on a corner shot from the left, which he headed into the goal, Karim Baqeri gave Iran the lead. Just seven minutes into the second half, Midfielder Khodadad Azizi doubled the lead.

It was a good day for Ali Daei, the best Iranian striker, who finished off the Koreans in the 66th, 78th, 85th and 88th minutes, putting Iran directly in the semifinals. Working through the Korean defense, Daei got off his second shot behind the box, which the Korean goalkeeper was unable to hold on to.

During the second half the Iranian defense stopped everything that came their way and the midfielders took the lead.

To pave the way for the final goal in the 88th minute, Khodadad Azizi broke free on a solo run and was bearing down on the goal when he was tackled down by the Korean goalkeeper, getting a penalty. The ball was kicked well into the frame by Ali Daei, to score his sixth goal, winding up the game.

Kim Doo-Hung and Sin Tai Yung scored for South Korea in the 12th and 35th minutes respectively.



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In the Name of God

What! they associate (with Him) that which does not create any thing, while they are themselves created!

(HOLY QORAN) (7:191)

OPINION

Iranian Nation Is Waiting for the Asian Cup

The Iranian national soccer team bounced South Korea out of Asian Cup, 6-2, yesterday. Earlier, in a marvelous performance versus Saudi Arabia, the same team smashed the kingdom's team which has literally been brought up with the help of petrodollars.

However, the same team showed a poor performance versus the realtively weaker Iraqi soccer team. The latest victories and the previous defeat of the Iranian team poses serious questions before the officials in charge of our football, who have been entrusted with the responsiblity of leading our team to the finals in the 11th round of the Asian Cup.

What have been the reasons for the earlier losses and the later wins? This is a crucial question which our sports officials should answer in order to be able to take the proper steps in future matches. Despite time limitations, Iranian coaches should try to find the answer to the above questions for their future matches.

Without any doubt, the players and the coach of the Iranian team must be patted on the s. ulder for their recent performance. We congratulate the players and the trainers. But the simple fact is that what the Iranian team has done is not complete unless they go ahead with the same enthusiasm they have shown in the last two games.

A greater task is ahead. Our officials should provide spiritual and material incentives for the team and coach in order to march ahead and bring the Asian Cup with themselves to Iran.

Rich Tribute Paid to Imam Hussein (AS) at Seminar

NEW DELHI — Glowing tribute was paid to Imam Hussein (AS) on the occasion of his birth anniversary on Sunday at a seminar in New Delhi, with distinguished speakers recalling his sacrifices for and services to Islam.

Cultural Counsellor of the Islamic Republic of Iran at Iran's Culture House in New Delhi, Mohsen Meeri, said that Imam Hussein (AS) saved Islam and humanity for all times to come.

Islam is a religion of humanity for whose protection and progress Imam Hussein (AS) paid sacrifices, added Meeri.

Delivering the presidential speech, noted Islamic scholar of India Khawaja Hasan Sani Nizami said, "Had there been no Imam Hussein (AS), human vlaues would not have prevailed and flourished."

Dr. Dharminder Nath, Aziz Haider, Smai-ul-Hasan Wasim and Professor Shah Mohammed Wasim were the other scholars who addressed the seminar, organized by Anjuman-e-Husseini. (IRNA)

Speaker: Getting Strong, Key to Resisting Enemy Plots

TEHRAN — Majlis Speaker Hojjatoleslam Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri said on Monday that any country wishing to resist the plots of arrogant powers should be strong and self-sufficient.

In a meeting with members of the Central Coun- Islamic Society of Workers ..e Nateq Nouri said that to create a country with such characteristics all groupings should work wholeheartedly and precisely.

Pointing to existence of seven million workers in Iran and their effective role in helping realize the objectives of the Islamic Republic, the Majlis speaker placed emphasis on elevation of the workers' political and cultural insight.

The hojjatoleslam added that the mission of the Islamic societies and groupings is to preach the *"shining"* rules of Islam and to promote the politico-religious insight of people from various walks of life. (IRNA)



Photo: Abbas Kowsari

Erbakan: Tehran, Ankara Relations Will Be Upgraded in All Levels

(Contd from Pg. 1)

broaden cooperation among developing countries, the Turkish prime minister stressed, adding that the Iranian president attaches great importance to this initiative.

On the impending visit to Turkey of President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani of Iran, he termed the visit as very important and essential for boosting bilateral relations.

Erbakan said Iran and Turkey are members of several international groupings including the Commission for Economic Cooperation (COMSEC), and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), adding that the two countries should have best kind of cooperation within the framework of new alliance of eight major developing states.

He said foreign ministers of the eight major developing states are expected to hold a meeting in T key on January 4 and that foreign ministers of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey would study the ECO's plan of action for the year 1997 to finalize it.

The Turkish prime minister said the volume of trade between Iran and Turkey would exceed $2.5 billion and a new agreement on the procedure of trade between the two states would be signed during the forthcoming visit of President Rafsanjani to Ankara.

"Iran and Turkey will develop their cooperation in the field of transport, ..u connection of Iranian and Turkish railway networks will be completed. Air and marine transportation and cooperation in banking and insurance will be developed. In general all the Western countries have done to develop relations among themselves will be done here." Er- kan said.

Asked about Turkey-Israel military accord, Prime Minister Erbakan said the accord is related to modernization of 60 Turkish F4 jets. He added that in view of the fact that a new F-4 jet costs $30 million but its modernization costs only $7 million it is wiser to choose the second option.

He said since the U.S. and Israel possess the technology needed for modernization of F-4 planes, a country willing to modernize its F-4 jet fighters has no other alternative but to do this in the U.S. or in Israel.

On allegations raised by Western countries on human rights abuses in Iran and Turkey, Erbakan said the Westerners' allegations are aimed at disintegrating Turkey. They thought they could create ethnic dispute in Turkey and thereby pit the Kurds against the Turks, he added.

He said the Westerners have launched extensive efforts over the past six or seven years and supported the terrorists, but, when the Turkish army suppressed the terrorist groups the Westerners understood that they could not succeed in their attempts.

"In the past, Turkey used to hold negative views on Iran during previous debates at the United Nations on the situation of human rights in Iran, but, now Turkey has adopted a positive stand toward Iran because there are no serious cases of human rights abuses in Iran and Turkey," the Turkish prime minister said.

He said the West by making biased comments on human rights situation in certain countries is actually seeking other goals, for example disintegrating of Turkey and blocking Ir and development.

On the prospects of Iraq and developments in northern Iraq, he said the expiry of the mandate of the poised hammer forces in Turkey is an important event. The forces were deployed in Turkey during the Persian Gulf war and the influx of refugees to Turkey from northern Iraq.

Erbakan reiterated, "We respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Iraq."

He expressed hope that all Muslim nations could live in peace and security within their borders, adding that there should be no territorial disputes between Muslim countries.

Erbakan said Turkey is interested in restoring the rights of all people in northern Iraq and mopping up the region of PKK separatist guerrillas.

He said Turkey is also interested in economic cooperation in the region, adding that his country made a loss of $27 billion during the Persian Gulf war in 1991 due to lack of business transactions with its neighboring countries.

The Turkish Premier also put emphasis on development of trade in the region and said that free trade amor Turkey, Iran and Iraq should be boosted. (IRNA)

Habibi Calls for Improvement of Yazd's Tourism Facilities

YAZD — First Vice President of Iran Hassan Habibi here Sunday said the city of Yazd had abundant tourist attractions and that it needed developed infrastructural tourism facilities with an emphasis on the cultural aspects of the enterprise.

Habibi said that the city had a unique traditional texture which would better be rehabilitated in its original form.

He proposed that a national association be formed for rehabilitating traditional textures in old cities with the involvement of the ministries of the interior, housing and urban development, and the National Heritage Organization of Iran.

Deputy Interior Minister for Development Affairs, Rasoul Zargar, said that 10 to 20 percent of the textures of the cities in the central Province of Yazd were traditional, but, the total population of that sector in the province was steadily decreasing.

On Sunday, the visiting first vice president of Iran also met with leaders of Friday congregational prayers of the province. In his talks with them he reminded the need for giving wider publicity to Islamic codes of conduct and to ethics as the leading concern of the people. (IRNA)

Ambassador Presents Credentials to UAE's President

ABU DHABI — Newly-appointed Ambassador of Iran to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Hossein Sadeqi here Sunday presented his credentials to the UAE's President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan.

The UAE's president wished success for the Iranian diplomat during his tenure in the country. (IRNA)

KDP Radio: PUK Have Expelled Over 7,000 Families

SANANDAJ, Kurdestan Province — Some 7,500 Iraqi Kurdish families have been expelled by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan from regions dominated by the PUK on alleged charges of siding with the Kurdish Democratic Party, the KDP Radio said in a report monitored here on Sunday.

The radio added that the displaced Kurdish families have settled in and around the northern Iraqi city of Erbil.

The PUK has also confiscated the belongings of the expelled families, the radio alleged.

It also said that the PUK forces have expelled 14 other Iraqi Kurdish families from Sulaymaniya in the recent weeks.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan has yet to react to the allegations made by the Kurdish Democratic Party Radio. (IRNA)

Expansion of Tehran-Riyadh Relations Discussed

ABU DHABI — Iranian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Hojjatoleslam Nouri Shahroudi in Riyadh on Sunday held talks with Saudi First Deputy Prime Minister and Commander of the National Guard Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abd al-Aziz on bilateral relations.

The two officials explored ways of developing ties between the two countries. Hojjatoleslam Shahroudi appreciated the Saudi move to increase Iranian quota for minor Hajj and said that it would serve to strengthen relations between the two nations.

He said the current tranquility in the Persian Gulf and the economic development in the region have lured the conspirators and the ruling Zionists in the U.S. to lead the region into chaos and to plunder the Muslim nations of their assets.

The ambassador said the regional states including Iran and Saudi Arabia should exercise vigilance and not allow the U.S. and the Zionist regime to attain their ominous goals.

Prince Abdullah said the Saudi Arabia is interested in progress and prosperity of its large neighboring country, Iran, and has always defended Iran and will do so in future. (IRNA)

Iran's Envoy, Syrian FM Hold Talks

DAMASCUS — Iran's Ambassador to Damascus Mohammad Haysan Ahtwri conferred with Syrian Minister for Foreign Affairs Farouk al-Shara here on Monday.

In the meeting the two sides discussed holding of the Joint Supreme Committee and the latest developments in the region.

The Iranian First Vice President Hassan Habibi participated in the last session of the Joint Supreme Committee in Damascus held last year. (IRNA)



World Bank Allocates $600 Million for Implementing 5 Projects in Iran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The World Bank has earmarked some 600 million dollars for the implementation of five projects in Iran over a period of 25 years, said the advisor to the World Bank on its projects in the Middle East and northen Africa. He made the above statement in Tehran on Monday on the sideline of the World Bank's educational gathering aimed at offering technical and engineering services.

He referred to the five projects as setting up some 600 medical centers in Iran's remote areas, constructing sewerage and collecting surface waters by the municipalities, preventing the flooding of Hirmand River in Sistan-Baluchestan Province, expansion of irrigation and drainage in five Iranian provinces and the project to generate electricity carried out by a company affiliated to the Iranian Energy Ministry.

The advisor further pointed at the project sponsored by the World Bank to reduce the air pollution in Tehran, which has been underway for almost two years, and noted that the project is implemented free of charge. He added that the World Bank allocates funds for the projects which are approved and that it is bound by no limitations in this regard.

In conclusion, he indicated that in view of the Iranian government's limitation on investment in different projects, the private sector should be invited to make investments in line with what has been aniticipated in the country's second development plan.

Outcome of Talks Between Iran, Foreign Oil Companies to Be Announced Soon

TEHRAN — Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh said here on Monday that his ministry would soon declare outcome of its talks with foreign companies for implementation of oil and gas projects in the oilfields left intact.

Aqazadeh said in an exclusive interview with IRNA that Iran was fully capable of financing the projects to be implemented for export of gas.

He said that Iran and Pakistan were engaged in studies on the cost and routing of a pipeline for transfer of Iranian gas to Pakistan.

The two sides would start serious talks for conclusion of a contract after studies on the issue are finished, the oil minister said.

As for the outcome of the OPEC ministerial session held in Vienna recently, the Iranian minister said the call by certain members for raising their production quotas and the talks on Iraq's entry into the oil market served to weaken the oil market and reduce the prices of oil by one dollar per barrel.

However, since OPEC had already predicted Iraq's entry into the market and its production quota, therefore, the member states had nothing to worry about and thus with the end of the session the oil price edged up to its previous level before the OPEC meeting.

As for the fifth meeting of oil producing and consuming countries held in India recently, Aqazadeh said the participants held talks on such important issues as energy, environment protection, taxation and prospect for energy in the next century.

He expressed hope that new phase of cooperation would start between the oil producing and consuming countries with drawing up of a specific strategy in their next meeting due to be held in South Africa next year.

(IRNA)

Expansion of Ties With Turkey, Croatia Discussed

TEHRAN — Ambassadors of Turkey and Croatia in Tehran on Sunday called for expansion of economic relations and exchange of technical know-how with Iran.

The call was made during their separate meetings with Iranian Minister of Roads and Transport Akbar Torkan. Turkish Ambassador Osman Koruturk said Central Asia can be connected to Turkey through Iran by linking the Mashhad-Sarakhs railway to the Turkish railways.

Torkan said that the value of Tehran-Ankara economic cooperation in the areas of gas, oil, electricity, transportation and industries is estimated to reach 2,000 billion dollars in the near future.

The Croatian Ambassador to Tehran Tomilave Bosnjak, referring to expansion of investments between Iranian and Croatian banks, requested that a third bank be assigned to guarantee the Croatian banks.

Torkan voiced Iran's readiness to cooperate with Croatia in manufacturing ships and added that Iran can purchase spare parts from that country.

(IRNA)

EU Repeats Opposition to U.S. Sanctions ahead of Washington Summit

LONDON — The current president of the European Union, Irish Prime Minister John Bruton, was set to reiterate the 15-nation group's opposition to U.S. unilateral sanctions when he meets President Clinton Monday.

Speaking before his departure for Washington, he said the EU had adopted a very strong position against U.S. extra-territorial legislation and that he would reaffirm this opposition.

A communique issued by European leaders at the end of their summit in Dublin Saturday also scolded Washington's use of sanctions, saying U.S. objectives should be pursued by means other than unilateral action at the expense of close partners.

U.S. legislation first against Cuba then against Iran and Libya has provoked a hostile response from the EU, including protesting to the World Trade Organisation about its legality.

Emphasizing Europe's different approach to Cuba, European leaders said they would consider negotiating a trade accord with Havana, while at the same time saying the respect of human rights and moves to political reform were a condition.

The dispute over sanctions threatened to mar what was being billed as a "milestone" summit in Washington that was expected to cover a wide range of issues, including trade, economic conditions and the drug trade.

Bruton was accompanied by European Commission President Jacques Santer, who has also been outspoken in his criticism of the U.S. increasingly resorting to use sanctions threats as part of its foreign policy.

The summit, held twice a year, marks the first anniversary of the EU-U.S. transatlantic dialogue, but is seen hampered in its aim to deepen and widen relations by the continuing dispute over extra-territorial laws.

(IRNA)

OPEC Prices Forecast to Remain Strong

LONDON — The average OPEC basket price in the first quarter of 1997 is expected to remain strong and could even exceed the level achieved during the last quarter of this year, according to a new report here.

The Center for Global Energy Studies said that the continuing need in the oil industry to rebuild stocks ought to ensure crude prices do not weaken in the next three months.

It forecast OPEC rates averaging 22.6 dollars per barrel (dpb) for the first three months of next year, up 40 cents on the current quarterly average.

If there was another protracted bout of cold weather in the northern hemisphere following November's colder-than-normal spell, the center suggested that average prices could go up by more than a further dollar a barrel.

Its word of caution was that since all members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries were enjoying the benefits of higher oil prices, it was more likely that OPEC's overproduction would increase rather than diminish.

In its conservative estimation, the center, established by former Saudi Oil Minister, Zaki Yamani, predicted that oil prices could erode significantly during the second quarter of 1997.

But it suggested that if delays again occur to cause lower than expected production from non-OPEC countries as they did this year, they would ameliorate price weakness and could, if large enough, halt the decline.

With regard to Iraq's limited return, the monthly oil report made the first hint that the UN's oil-for-food deal may not be renewed in June, speculating this may come from Saddam Hussein, pushing instead for a full lifting of sanctions.

(IRNA)

Market Economy Depends on Federative Relations: Report

MOSCOW — Successful development of market relations in Russia is impossible without consolidation of federalism because the federative relations must be in keeping with the system of economic interests, says a draft analytical report on the development of federative relations in Russia due to be discussed by the scientific and expert council under the federation council speaker on Monday.

The council members, including academician Leonid Abalkin, political scientist Igor Klyamkin, banker Sergei Yegorov and others, believe that the real federalism, which was non-existent under totalitarian rule, should ensure equal rights and free development of all peoples, equal political and legal possibilities for Russia's constituent parts in their relations with the center and the development of local self-rule as the basis for the state system.

The observance of these principles guarantees the country's unity and integrity, says the report which proposes a number of immediate measures to overcome the tendencies towards collapsing of the Russian statehood and revival of the administrative and command system.

(IRNA)

Tanker Begins Loading Iraqi Oil in Turkey

YUMURTALIK, Turkey — An oil tanker began loading Iraqi crude from a joint Turkish-Iraqi pipeline in this port in southern Turkey on Monday in a move Turkish leaders hailed as opening the way for economic revitalization of the region.

At a ceremony at the Mediterranean port, Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller gave a simultaneous order by radio for loading of the tanker, the Gole, to begin.

The resumption of Iraqi oil exports for the first time in six years under an easing of the UN embargo against Baghdad will provide a major economic boost for Turkey which was also hit hard by the sanctions.

"This is a historic day for Turkey," Erbakan said in front of thousands of people waving flags of his Islamist Welfare Party.

Iraqi oil began flowing last week through the joint pipeline, which was closed under the UN sanctions imposed following Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, and on Sunday, Iraq loaded its first shipment of crude oil on to a tanker at its gulf terminal at Mina al-Bakr.

"Our goal is to make possible utilization of the pipeline at full capacity as soon as we can," Erbakan said, indicating his desire for a full lifting of the embargo against Iraq. The tanker was to to leave Yumurtalik later on Monday with 153,500 tons of oil destined for a refinery at Izmit in northern Turkey, Turkish officials said.

Under the UN oil-for-food deal finally approved last week, Iraq can export two billion dollars of oil every six months in order to buy food and medicine as well as defray UN costs and pay compensation to the victims of the invasion of Kuwait.

The nearly 1,000-kilometer (650-mile) pipeline carries oil from fields around Kirkuk in northern Iraq to Yurmurtalik in southeast Turkey where it is shipped to Europe. It has a capacity of 1.2 million barrels a day.

Before the pipeline's closure six years ago, the volume of annual trade between Iraq and Turkey was almost two billion dollars and Ankara estimates it has lost a total of 30 billion dollars because of the embargo.

"In exchange for oil exports, Iraq will import goods from Turkey, which will contribute to the recovery of the depressed economy in the southeast," Erbakan said. Turkey announced last week it would buy 3.6 million t Iraqi oil each year.

Erbakan said his government is aiming to transform the Yumurtalik region into a major world distribution center for energy from the Middle East and the Caucasian region of eastern Europe.

"We want to make Turkey, which is not an oil producer, a major energy distribution country," he said.

Iraq's ambassador to Turkey Rafi Dahham al-Tikriti, said he hoped the reopening of the pipeline represented a "fruitful resumption of economic relations between the two brother countries."

(AFP)





Women's Stance in Islamic Culture and Their Role in Fighting Cultural Invasion



(Excerpts from Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution's addresses regarding women's issues)

Western Viewpoint About Women

In the ancient Roman Empire, whose cultural heritage is still the main pillar of European, American and other sub-cultures, the Romans respected women, gave them a high social status, and adorned them with expensive jewelry and cosmetics. But why was all this attention paid to women in the ancient Roman Empire and why is it paid to women in Western societies today? The main purpose behind all this flattery was to, and still is to, satisfy one of the most earthly, material desires of mankind in the male gender.

This is a big blot on humanity in general, Western man in particular, and an unjustifiable, inhumane way of treating women, who are created equal.

After the Industrial Revolution early in the 19th century, when the European industrialists were in desperate need of cheap manpower with low demands, they began to advocate the so-called Women's Liberation Movement.

The main objective of this movement was primarily to change the social position of women from the dominating authority at the family center into the inappropriate atmosphere of the factories as an endless source of "cheap work force", thus filling the pockets of the capitalists, while ironically devaluating women's social status as well.

The current Women's Lib movement in Western societies is in fact the continuation of the same trend. The cruelty imposed on women in the West throughout history and the distorted image portrayed of women in Western literature is unparalleled to any other injustice imposed on women at all times.

Women have also been subject to discrimination in the course of history, but the all-sided downgrading and cruelty imposed on them in the contemporary era by Western society — where they are looked upon merely as means of fulfilling the sexual desires of men — disguised as "Women's Lib" is a specific characteristic of contemporary Western culture. It is in fact as nasty and disgusting as "liberty for corrupt men to take advantage of any woman."

It is not only the working conditions and the framework of factories where women have been subjected to discrimination in the West, but in most fields of Western art and literature as well they are constantly discriminated against.

Take a look at contemporary Western novels, paintings, short stories and sculptures and judge for yourself their viewpoint on women.

Do they highlight the positive aspects of women's personalities in their arts? Are her delicate feelings and sentimental soul, which are a precious heavenly gift, her motherly feelings, her instinct to rear children and train them so tenderly without expecting the slightest reward, stressed in various Western arts? Or is it their erotic characteristics, what they call "love" which is portrayed in their art?

It is in fact unleashed passion, not love, which they keep depicting. They have always meant to train women in such a way as to fit the corrupt pattern of behavior traditionally practiced, while training women to be accustomed to and contented with it. What they want her to be is a very liberal-minded sex object and a cheap source of labor.

Islam, on the other hand, does not consider this a positive value for a woman, but rather forbids such insulting approach. (To be cont'd)

Women Swell Ranks of Working Poor

Part 2

More Work for Less Pay: Feminine Jobs

Occupational segregation on the basis of gender remains high for all regions of the world, irrespective of development levels. The report cites data for some 500 non-agricultural occupations in the United States, the United Kingdom and France showing that approximately 45% of the labor force is organized around gender-dominated occupations in which either women or men make up at least 80% of the work-force. In Japan, women make up 95% of the work-force in such occupations as day care, hospital attendants and nurses, kindergarten teachers, housekeepers, maids and entertainers.

"Not only do men and women have different occupations," says Lin Lim, "men commonly do work of higher pay and status; for example most school administrators and doctors are men whereas most teachers and nurses are women."

In East and South-East Asia, women provide up to 80% of the work-force in export processing zones. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 71% of all female workers are concentrated in the service sector, but the number of unrecorded female workers in manufacturing is thought to be high.

In Asia and Africa, most women workers (more than 80% in sub-Saharan Africa) are found in the agricultural sector — where wages are generally among the lowest — and more than one-third of women in nonagricultural activities are in the informal sector. In spite of women's preponderance in agriculture, it is estimated that only 5% of rural credit from multilateral banks ever reaches them.

Women predominate in informal sector work, usually because it is the only employment they can find and where incomes are often at poverty levels. In the Dominican Republic, for example, 70% of women in the informal sector earn incomes below the poverty level.

In all regions of the world, the report notes, females work longer hours for lower wages than their male counterparts. In developed countries, women work at least two hours more per week than men, though five to 10 hours more per week is not unusual. In Australia, Canada and Germany, the hourly Work burdens of men and women are roughly equal, but in Italy women work 28% more than men, in Austria 12% more and in France 11%. In Japan, the time women spend on unpaid work is nine times greater than that of men.

In developing countries women spend between 31 and 42 hours per week in unpaid activities, versus five to 15 hours for men. In Kenya women spend 10 times more on domestic tasks than men. In India, women and girls spend at least 20 hours more per week on domestic work. Family responsibilities, the report notes, nearly always weigh more heavily on women than on men, "even for the relatively small numbers of women whose education and skills qualify them for higher-level jobs".

Last Hired, First Fired

In addition to being the last hired, women are also among the first fired. The report finds that "women's unemployment rates tend to be higher than those of men". In developed regions of the world, officially reported unemployment rates among women for recent years are anywhere from 50 to 100% higher than for men, although in absolute terms more men are openly unemployed (because of their higher labor-force participation rates.)

In developing regions, where underemployment is the greater problem, available data on open unemployment show considerably higher female than male rates in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia. The report also cites evidence, including in the transition economies of Central and Eastern Europe, that "discrimination against women tends to increase as unemployment levels go up", with the rationale being that men need jobs more than women; the result is that "women, and especially older women, predominate among the long-term unemployed".

Improving Jobs and Working Conditions for Women

The ILO argues that "increasing employment opportunities for women is not sufficient; there must be action to improve the terms and conditions of such employment". Steps to enhance the quality of employment for women need to take account of the following issues, all of which are covered by international labor standards:

* Enforcing the principle of "comparable worth by providing equal pay for work of equal values". This is necessary in order to eliminate male-female wage differences within industries and to reduce the large differences between "female" jobs and "male" jobs in the highly gender-segregated world of work.

* Improving occupational safety and health for women workers, in order to alleviate and eliminate environmental and work-place hazards, especially those affecting pregnant and lactating women.

* Measures to reduce labor market vulnerability, especially to improve security in informal or atypical forms of work. Women often have to resort to non-standard employment, involving, for example, part-time or homework, due to the need to combine work and domestic responsibilities. The risk is that such forms of employment are often precarious and not covered by the legal and social security systems applying to standard employment.

* Guaranteeing freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively, for women in the formal sector, collective action, particularly through trade unions, is crucial and collective bargaining needs to take greater account of feminine issues. For women in non-formal, atypical or rural employment, grass-roots mobilization and organization is an important form of empowerment.

* Appropriate labor market regulations, which would take account of women's need for flexibility, special protective measures in such areas as maternity protection and child care, and steps towards eliminating pervasive inequality in opportunities and treatment between men and women workers.

Providing more and better jobs for women will also involve a conducive macro-economic environment, including accurate and realistic data, in order to develop coherent and effective gender-sensitive policies. Policies need to consider the legal framework, enforcement mechanisms, cultural attitudes and public awareness.

Full-Time, Secure and Stable, Formal Sector Employment

The author of the report, Lin Lim, says that measures to improve women's employment, including education and training programs, labor legislation covering working conditions, social security arrangement and collective representation and bargaining, have been based on the idea that women would be in full-time, secure and stable, formal sector employment. Taxation and social welfare systems have been built on the image of the man as the breadwinner and the woman as the dependent or secondary earner. "That image no longer applies and procedures need to be reviewed in order to accommodate the reality of today and to ensure that new or non-standard forms of employment for women are not sub-standard in terms of human rights, working conditions, social security and career prospects."

(Courtesy World of Work Magazine)



Women fill multiple roles, functioning not only as consumers, but also as producers, home managers, mothers and community organizers. In rural Africa, a young mother receives practical training in home construction as part of a project sponsored by the United Nations Develoment Program.

ks of Working Po

TEHRAN TIMES

DECEMBER 17, 1996



AL-AIN, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (December 15): Kuwaiti defenders Bader Al-Hajj (L) and Osama Abdullah (C) run after Japanese forward Masakiyo Maezono (R) during their Asian Cup quarter-final match at the AL-AIN stadim. Kuwait beat Japan 2-0 and qualified for the semi-finals.

(AFP PHOTO)

Penalty Saves Disappoting Argentina

PARIS, dec 15 (AFP) - A penalty from Batistuta in the 70th minute saved Argentina's blushes and enabled them to force a disappointing 1-1 draw with Chile in Sunday's bad-tempered South American Zone World Cup qualifier in Buenos Aires in which both teams had a man sent off.

The visitors had gone ahead eight minutes into the second-half through Cornejo.

Chile had Chavarria ordered off after just half-an-hour and then Argentina's Ayala got his marching orders on the hour.

In other South American zone matches, group pacesetters Colombia stretched their unbeaten run to seven matches when they scored a 2-0 victory away to Venezuela.

Serna opened the scoring after just seven minutes and Valenciano put the matter beyond doubt with a second goal — four minutes into the second-half.

It was Venezuela's sixth defeat in seven matches and they have yet to win a match in the nine nation group.

Two goals in the first-half enabled Uruguay to score a 2-0 victory over Peru in Montevideo.

Paolo Montero got the home side off the mark after just two minutes and Pablo Bengoechea scored the second six minutes from half-time.

The only black mark on a good performance came seven minutes from time when Uruguay's Marcelo Otero was shown the red card.

Uruguay have now won three and lost two matches.

In La Paz, Bolivia, with only one win after five matches, held second-placed Paraguay to a 0-0 draw.

In the CONCACAF group two matches, Canada came away 2-0 winners from Salvador thanks to second-half goals from Watson and Bumbury.

Both teams have qualified for the final play-off phase.

The other match saw Panama score a 3-1 home win over Cuba.

(AFP)

Anstralian Club To Help Stricken French Yachtsman

PERTH, Australia — One of Australia's most prestigious sailing clubs is standing by to help star French yachtsman Yves Parlier, struggling to reach the refuge of western Australia after his yacht was severely damaged.

Parlier, sailing Aquitaine Innovations, was one of the leaders of a fleet of 15 yachts in the Vende Globe Challenge, a single-handed, non-stop, round-the-world race in which he is the race favourite.

Race participants were hit by storms nine days ago. Parlier's 20-metre (65-foot) hi-tech boat is among three to receive severe damage. It has damaged rudders, deck fittings and sails.

Fremantle sailing club has pledged to give parlier any help he needs when he reaches Fremantle. The club sponsored record-breaking round-the-world mariner David Dicks, who recently became the youngest helmsman to circumnavigate the globe alone and non-stop, at the age of 18.

"We have told yachting authorities in france we will give whatever help we can," Club General Manager Brian Adams told AFP Monday.

"As soon as he gets here, we will lift him out of the water, and arrange for whatever repairs he may need."

Parlier is believed to have been about 400 nautical miles southwest of Cape Leeuwin, western Australia's most south-westerly point, when trouble struck.

Adams said it was estimated he would reach FRemantle around next Sunday, December 22.

A support crew being flown in from France is expected to reach Fremantle by the middle of this week, Adams said.

(AFP)

Egyptian Champions Record Fourth Title Win

JOHANNESBURG — Zamalek of Egypt became the most successful club in African history by lifting the Champions Cup a record fourth time this weekend with a dramatic triumph over Nigerian side shooting stars.

Both legs of the final produced 2-1 victories for the home team so the continental showpiece went to a penalty shootout at the nasser stadium in Cairo which Zamalek won 5-4.

The Egyptian aristocrats seem to revel in the tension of post-match penalties with three consecutive titles coming via shootouts following the 3-0 rout of stars in 1984.

Captain Ismail Youssef, a midfielder who played for Egypt in the 1990 World Cup, featured in the four victorious teams and was also involved in the 1994 decider, which Zamalek lost to Esperance of Tunisia.

There was only frustration for Nigeria as the 28th attempt to lift the ultimate prize ended in failure despite huge financial incentives and the support of national coach Amodu Shaibu and a psychologist.

Success completed an African-Club double for Egypt as Arab contractors, who have lived in the shadows cast by Cairo giants Zamalek and Al-Ahly, collected the Cup-Winners Cup last weekend.

Contractors were guided to glory by German coach Michael Kruger and his compatriot, former Bayern Munich defender Werner Olk, was the mastermind behind Zamalek.

Knowing a solitary goal would be sufficient to secure victory on the away-goal rule, Zamalek attacked from the outset and struck the post twice before taking a 29th-minute lead.

Ayman Mansour crossed low into the penalty area and unmarked defender Medhat Abdel Hadi curled a left-foot shot past giant Nigerian goalkeeper Abiodun Baruwa.

Outclassed stars suffered a crippling blow after 60 minutes when substitute David Ogaga was sent off by the Malian referee for punching midfielder Ossama Nabil.

Zamalek doubled their advantage within six minutes as veteran defender Ashraf kassem set up mustapha tarek, who beat the advancing Baruwa and crossed for unmarked Mansour to head home.

Backed by a hysterical 100,000 crowd, the Egyptians continued to press forward in search of a decisive third goal only to be caught napping with less they two minutes left.

A rare Nigerian attack triggered a goalmouth scramble which ended with substitute Ademola Johnson powering a left-foot shot beyond the reach of Hussein Al-Sayed.

With extra time not permitted under African regulations, the destiny of the trophy hinged on the shootout and the tension became almost unbearable when each side converted four of the regulation five kicks.

Nabil put Zamalek ahead again and when Johnson saw his fierce shot slam off the underside of the bar and rebound into play, he fell to the ground crestfallen.

Nigerian supporters also lost out as riot police chased them from the ground during the second half after they retaliated to a barrage of stones pelted by Egyptians on higher terraces.

(AFP)



10-Day National Finals Rodeo Leaves Cowboys Bruised and Busted

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — Texas bronco rider Lance, Crump scowled at his two fingers like misbehaving children. Betraying no pain before his third ride with his injuries, he declared: "I'm gonna ride again."

"The doctors say it's as bad as it's gonna get," said 24-year-old crump. "It ain't easy but I can take it. The hardest part is squeezing my hand into the rig and trying to hold on to it."

The rig is the rope wrapped tightly around his hand and fingers and attached to a bucking, twisting horse. Crump not only has to stay on the horse for eight seconds, but do it with enough style to please the judges.

The 10-day national finals rodeo ended here Sunday and most of the bronco or bull riders — even if injured — competed every day for the world champion title and the considerable sum of money and respect it confers.

At most rodeos, the cowboys ride one or two days and leave. Here, they rode again and again with pulled tendons, dislocated joints, broken ribs and fingers, stitches, whiplashed necks and a rainbow of bruises.

These are the best riders from the United States and Canada up against the toughest stock the trade has to offer, and usually it is the cowpokes who end up worse for the wear, said doctor Andrew Freeman.

"After 10 days of the consistently best stock, it takes a toll on you. It separates the guys on the basis of how well they hold up," Freeman said.

Those who get injured do what they call 'cowboy up'. If there were a latin medical term for that it would probably translate to mean 'do nothing'.

"What you'll find is a guy will grit his teeth and go back out and ride," Freeman explained. "They won't take any kind of painkiller that will affect their nervous system because they know that will affect their performance."

Crump's treatment consists of dosing up on some advil and getting a dab of sympathy. They briefly attach an electrical device to his fingers to reduce swelling.

A study by Justin Boots, one of the rodeo's sponsors, found — to nobody's surprise — that most (43 percent) of the injuries in the rodeo were suffered by bullriders. They also suffered the most serious injuries.

In recent years the bullriders have been wearing padded vests to keep hooves from breaking their chests. A few wear head gear and face masks to keep their skulls from being crushed. But they are still most likely the ones to limp away.

The bulls weigh close to 1,012 kilos (2,000 pounds). When they are bucking, the combined force and torque can exert as much as 2,250 kilos (5,000 pounds) of pressure on a single part of the body, said Don Andrews, rodeo medical director.

"Our main concern is when the bulls land on the head, neck and chest. Extremities are painful," he said. "But not life threatening."

Bareback and saddlebronc horse riders combined suffered 42 percent of the injuries, most of them affecting the neck and spine, according to the study.

"Those bareback bronco riders get whiplashed whenever they ride and they're riding every day (of the finals). It's like getting in a car wreck each time they ride," said doctor Pat Evans.

Most wear neck rolls to soften the effect, but toward the end of the 10-day trial, many behind the scenes were getting massaged, taped up and walked around wearing ice packs on their necks.

To get back in the ring, they pumped up their adrenaline. Chance Dixon entered the seventh round of saddlebronc competition with a separated shoulder on his riding arm. He split a win with another rider.

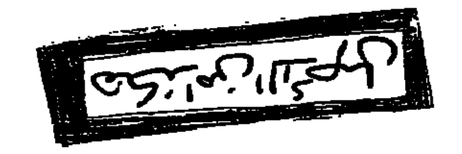
Ote Berry of Utah turned down an invitation to play golf the morning of his steer roping event because it hurt too much to lift his hyperextended elbow, but he went on Friday night to win the event.

(AFP)



ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (December 15): UAE's Munther Abdulla (C) dribbles past Iraqi defenders Hayder Majeed (L) and Esam Salem during their Asian Cup quarterfinal match in Abu Dhabi.

(AFP PHOTO)



Arafat Says Negotiations With Israel to Resume

GAZA CITY — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said Monday that he and Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu had agreed to resume stalled peace negotiations despite high tensions caused by Israel's settlement policies and a renewal of violence in the occupied territories.

Arafat said he discussed the beleagured peace process in a late night phone call Sunday to Prime Minister Netanyahu and in talks here with two top aides to the Israeli leader, Cabinet secretary Danny Naveh and attorney Yitzhak Molkho.

"What happened is that the Israelis said they want to continue negotiations. We told them 'welcome,'" Arafat told reporters at his office.

Speaking of his talks with the Israeli envoys, he added: "The important thing concerning this meeting is continuity in the peace process and we were insisting to carry on in this line."

Arafat said the deadlocked Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on resuming implementation of the Oslo self-rule agreements would be pursued in "all aspects ... There is no condition to come back to the discussions."

Netanyahu dispatched Nqveh and Molkho, who have been closely involved in negotiations on the extension of self-rule to Al-Khalil, after the Palestinian leadership expressed its outrage over an Israeli government decision on Friday to provide new financial incentives to Jewish settlement in the occupied territories.

Arafat warned over the weekend that the decision to resurrect a special priority status for West Bank settlements was a "time-bomb" that could lead to new violence.

"Soon we will not be able to stop the downward slide and once we have counted up the dead we will be back where we started," he said.

Netanyahu for his part over the weekend accused Palestinian leaders of planning "a new wave of violence" similar to clashes between Palestinian police and protestors and Israeli troops in September which left 86 dead — an allegation Arafat dismissed as "propaganda."

Netanyahu's latest settlement decision also drew strong protests from Arab and Western governments, with Washington calling it "troubling" and "unhelpful."

(AFP)

Arab League Calls For "Serious and Urgent" U.S. Peace Moves

CAIRO — The Arab League on Monday urged the United States to take serious and immediate steps to push forward the stalled Middle East peace process, a senior advisor to secretary general Esmat Abdel Meguid said.

"The time has come for the United States to carry out serious efforts because the situation has become dangerous and the region sits atop a volcano ready to erupt," Ahmad Benhelli told reporters.

Benhelli deplored what he described as a change in U.S. views on Israel's settlement policies in the occupied territories, which he said threatened a return of violence in the region.

"It is sad that U.S. statements which once criticized Israeli settlements and considered them illegal should recede and be replaced by statements describing these settlements merely as an obstacle to peace," he said.

Benhelli also denounced what he said was an Israeli "escalation" in South Lebanon after bombing raids by Israeli warplanes on Sunday against strongholds Hezbollah in the area.

He said it was an attempt by the Zionists to disrupt security and development in Lebanon.

Sunday's bombing raids and attacks by Hezbollah guerrillas on Israeli forces represented some of the most intense fighting to erupt in South Lebanon since an April cease-fire.

(AFP)

U.S. Calls For Special Police Force to Arrest War Criminals

SARAJEVO — Top U.S. defense official General John Shalikashvili said Monday that an international police force should be set up in Bosnia to arrest war crimes suspects wanted by The International Tribunal in The Hague.

"A way must be found for an international police force to be constituted," Shalikashvili, head of the U.S. joint chiefs of staff, told reporters here.

He said that this should not be the job of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) which replaces the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) when its mandate ends on December 20.

"We shouldn't make the mistake of thinking that soldiers can well act as policemen. It is police work," said Shalikashvili, who was visiting troops here.

He added that NATO was not the right institution to set up such a police force.

Seventy-five people have been indicted by The Hague tribunal, including former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and former Bosnian Serb Army chief General Ratko Mladic.

Under the Dayton peace agreements, the local police forces should arrest war crime suspects and extradite them to The Hague, but only a handful are currently held by the tribunal and the rest are still at large, many living openly in Serb-run parts of Bosnia.

"It's a great disappointment that the signatories of the Dayton accord did not carry out their responsibilities by turning over war criminals in their areas of responsibilities to The Hague," Shalikashvili said.

The U.S. official said that he was happy with the way the IFOR mission had been carried out, and on December 21, the force would be going home "with its head held high."

Chechen Commander Says Dudayev Is Alive and Will Return

GROZNY, Russia — Chechen separatist Commander Salman Raduyev hinted Monday that leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, thought to have been killed in a missile attack, was alive and would stage a dramatic return next month. "On January 25 there will be a very interesting event and at that moment everything will become clear. We are in the middle of preparing a huge military parade for the army of Dzhokhar Dudayev," Raduyev said at a press conference. It was a hint that the Chechen leader could reappear on that date, two days before planned presidential elections in the northern Caucasus republic. Rumours that Dudayev is still alive have multiplied because of the mysterious circumstances surrounding his reported death. Chechen rebel sources said Dudayev was killed on April 21 when a Russian air-to-surface missile homed in on his satellite telephone near the village of Gekhi Chu.

Egyptian FM Off to NAM Meeting

CAIRO — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa will hold talks in Paris on Tuesday with representatives of four other Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries expected to focus on the fight against terrorism, Foreign Ministry sources said.

Mussa will be meeting his counterparts from India, Indonesia and Colombia at a meeting hosted by France, which is the current chairman of the G-7 industrialized countries.

During the meeting they will exchange views on international and regional developments, including the fight against terrorism, the Middle East peace process, world economic reforms and the foreign debt of less developped countries, the sources said.

Mussa is currently in Qatar but is due back here late Monday ahead of his flight Tuesday to Paris.

Uday's Health Deteriorates, Opposition Claims

DAMASCUS — President Saddam Hussein's son Uday is in "serious condition" following last week's ambush in Baghdad, an Iraqi opposition group which claimed responsibility for the attack said Monday.

"The condition of the criminal Uday, son of the despot Saddam, has deteriorated because he is suffering from severe wounds in different parts of his body," the Al-Dawa al-Islamayia said Monday from its Damascus office.

Uday is in "serious condition," the group said quoting unidentified sources in Iraq.

Uday, who was in Ibn Sina Hospital, was transferred to another location surrounded by elite security forces where a team of specialist doctors, including foreigners, were to operate on him, Dawa said.

Al-Dawa issued a statement from its Beirut office on Saturday claiming responsibility for a machine gun attack that wounded Uday as he was driving.

(AFP)



AMMAN, Jordan (Dec. 15): Jordanian Prime Minister Karim Kabariti (L) welcomes his Tunisian counterpart Hammed Karwi (R). Karwi is in Amman for a four-day official visit to talk with Jordanian officials on the Mideast peace process and on means to boost bilateral ties.

(AFP PHOTO)

Court Annuls Second Milosevic Win

BELGRADE — A Serbian court has restored an opposition victory in last month's local elections, in the second such ruling in two days against the government of President Slobodan Milosevic, Beta news agency said Monday.

It said the court had recognized the second round of November 17 municipal elections — later annulled by the government — which gave the opposition 25 of the 49 seats on the council of Smederevska Palanka, southeast of Belgrade.

On Sunday, a court in Nis, Serbia's second city, annulled a victory there by Milosevic's Socialist Party, and ordered the electoral commission to look again at how 26 seats were awarded to the ruling party.

Smederevska Palanka is a small town 70 kilometers (40 miles) from Belgrade with some 25,000 residents.

Ljiljana Derovic, a member of the opposition together coalition quoted by Beta, said another seat was still being contested, as the opposition claimed it had actually won 26 seats.

(AFP)

Palestinians, Israel to Resume Negotiations Despite Tensions

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — Israel and the Palestinians have decided to resume peace talks despite tensions over Israel's decision to pump large sums of money into Jewish settlements in the West Bank, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said Monday. Arafat's statement came after he spoke by telephone to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday night and met with a Netanyahu adviser at his Gaza city headquarters. Arafat's conciliatory tone suggested that the two sides were moving back from a confrontation that appeared inevitable after the Israeli cabinet voted Friday to grant benefits worth tens, if not hundreds of millions of dollars, to Jewish settlements in the West Bank. The subsidies will lure more Israelis to the disputed lands where the Palestinians hope to set up an independent state. Some 145,000 settelers now live amid 2 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Arafat agreed to meet with Netanyahu's attorney, Yitzhak Molcho, after having refused for several days to receive the prime minister's advisers. After the meeting, Arafat called Netanyahu in Bait-ul-Moqaddas. Netanyahu also told Arafat on Sunday night that an agreement on an Israeli troop pullback in the West Bank town of Al-Khalil could be reached quickly. "We are committed to the peace agreements, and both sides have to honor their commitments," Netanyahu told Arafat.

Asked Monday about his contacts with the Israelis, Arafat told reporters: "The most important thing concerning the meeting is the continuation of the negotiations. We are insisting to continue the negotiations."

He said talks would resume not only on the issue of Al-Khalil, but also concerning the other elements of the peace agreements that have yet to be carried out.

(AFP)

Iranian Ambassador Meets Omani Sultan

TEHRAN — Iranian Ambassador to Muscat Siyavash Zargar Ya'qoubi and Omani Sultan Qaboos bin Said in a meeting in Muscat on Saturday exchanged views on Tehran-Muscat ties as well as regional issues.

Sultan Qaboos at the meeting underlined his country's willingness to consolidate its historical ties with Iran.

(IRNA)

(Contd from Pg. 1)

SYRIA ...

The Middle East peace process has been deadlocked since Netanyahu's rightwing administration came to power in June.

"The Israeli government is exploiting the continuation of talks and normalization to deceive the world about its aggressive intentions," the newspaper said.

Tishrin also said that halting Western arms sales as well as American and European financial aid to Israel could contain its "aggressive and provocative" policy.

Al-Baath, the ruling party newspaper, said verbal condemnations of Israel by the international community were "an important step" but "ineffective against such a fanatical and racist government."

"There needs to be more effective measures which will force Israel to subscribe to international laws," it added.

Since coming to office, Netanyahu has suspended implementation of the 1995 Oslo agreements on Palestinian Autonomy signed by his Labor predecessors and has lifted restrictions on Jewish settlement in the occupied territories.

In addition, peace talks between Israel and Syria, which were frozen in February, have still not been resumed.

The United States and the European Union last week both expressed their concern about Israel's settlement policy.

(AFP)

(Contd from Pg. 1)

RAFSANJANI ....

nomic Cooperation Organization sharing common borders and historical commonalities.

In his recent visit to Tehran, Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan signed a contract with Iran for importing Iranian gas.

Both Iran and Turkey maintain common stance regarding the territorial integrity of Iraq and a host of other regional and international issues. President Rafsanjani's visit is considered as a turning point in the history of bilateral ties.



First Training Workshop on Mother-Child Health, Safety Opens

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The First Consultative and Training Workshop on Mother-Child Health and Safety inaugurated here yesterday.

The workshop aims at providing better services in pre-and post-natal care, safe delivery, and giving better services for infants, Iranian Minister of Health and Medical Education, Dr. Ali Reza Marandi, said in his opening address.

Today the estimated rate of maternal mortality in the Islamic Republic of Iran is approximately 40 per 100,000 cases; this will have direct and indirect negative impacts on the society, said Marandi. Maternal mortality is caused by bleeding (25%), infection (15%), blood pressure (12%), abortion (10%), and other factors.

Infant mortality in Iran is estimated at 16-20 per 1,000. This number is based on approximately 7 million infant deaths throughout the world, 99 percent of which occurs in the Third World, noted Marandi. The representative of UNFPA in Tehran expressed his appreciation over measures performed by the Islamic Republic of Iran in achieving the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994 before the predicted deadline, and ecouraged other countries to follow its pattern.

The two goals of ICPD were as follows: A) "All countries should strive to make accessible, through the primary health care system, reproductive health to all individuals of appropriate ages, as soon as possible, and no later than the year 2015"; and B) "Countries should strive to effect significant reductions in maternal mortality by the year 2015 - a reduction in maternal mortality by one-half of the 1990 levels by the year 2000, and a further one-half by 2015.

U.S.-French Dispute Clouds NATO Meeting

BRUSSELS — NATO defense ministers were to gather here Tuesday for a two-day meeting amid a dispute between the United States and France over who should command the alliance's southern flank — an American or a European.

The dispute, one of a cluster between Washington and Paris, threatens to delay indefinitely an overhaul of NATO's command structure and France's return to the alliance's military structure, which would end a 30-year absence.

At the meeting, defense ministers will give final approval for the deployment of a 31,000-strong stabilization force for Bosnia when the current Peace Implementation Force (IFOR) mission ends December 20, officials said. They also will discuss the enlargement of the 16-member alliance, opposed by Russia.

Russian Defense Minister Igor Rodionov will meet with the ministers Wednesday for talks on Moscow's relations with NATO, notably the posting of Russian military liaison officers at NATO headquarters and a NATO officer in the Russian general staff.

But overshadowing the meeting here was the U.S.-French impasse over the Naples-based southern command.

Neither side has budged since the issue came to a head when NATO defense ministers held an informal meeting in Bergen in September. clashes between Washington and Paris over the UN secretary general and Africa have fanned the flames.

A senior U.S. military official told reporters in Washington last week that the U.S. position has not changed: As home to the U.S. 6th fleet, the Naples command is too crucial to the United States to hand over to a European.

The Americans cite the command's importance to U.S. strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

France, for its part, is adamant that since the United States by tradition holds NATO's two strategic commands — Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) — the regional commands should go to Europeans. (AFP)

U.S. Is Sabotaging Iran's Peace Efforts: Indian Journalist

NEW DELHI — Guided by its one-point program to contain and isolate Iran, the United States is hell-bent on sabotaging sincere peace efforts on the part of Tehran in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia, says A.G. Noorani, an eminent journalist of India.

However, these Iranian peace efforts, notably its holding of a successful conference on Afghanistan on October 30, serve as a message to the U.S. that Iran is a responsible member of the international society, it is ready to perform its obligations as a peaceful nation and is an important player in the region, adds Noorani in his article, 'Iran's Diplomacy — Will Clinton Respond?', published in the English newspaper of India *The Statesman* yesterday.

Referring to an article in *The Washington Post* and *The International Herald Tribune* by Iran's Permanent Representative to the UN Kamal Kharrazi, Noorani writes that Kharrazi rightly points out that Iran has done its best to promote a durable peace in Afghanistan, but its efforts have been foiled by the U.S.

Noorani says that of late Iran has been fairly active on international scene. It has talked about inter-Asian cooperation with China, India, Pakistan and Iran as its axis. It welcomes Sino-Russian entente. It has made overtures to France and Germany to enter West Asia political scene. Iran's interests in the ECO and Caspian Union are well known and President Rafsanjani has recently called for a regional security organization for the countries of the Indian Ocean.

Iran is not even averse to resume a working relationship with the U.S. provided it is on the terms which do not affect Iran's self respect, adding that however, unfortunately, the U.S. is not ready for the same.

Noorani reminds of Iranian gestures of goodwill towards the U.S. in President Rafsanjani personally intervening to help it secure the release of the last American and European hostages held in Lebanon, but notes U.S.'s failure to keep its promise of releasing Iran's frozen assets.

In fact, during the first tenure of Clinton, the U.S. turned more and more aggressive towards Tehran, dreaming Soviet Union like collapse of Iran under the pressure of weakening economy and international isolation, says Noorani.

Not only this, the U.S. went on to impose trade sanctions against Iran. To cap it all, there is the congressional authorizations on December 31, 1995 of $20 million to finance opponents of Iranian government in their plans for its overthrow and replacement by a puppet regime like the Shah's in 1953, he points out.

If this is not the support to international terrorism, what it is, asks Noorani?

Noorani further mentions that however neither the European nations nor Japan are amused by the American hypocrisy.

Their perception was well summed up by Charles Lane of *The New Republic* in an article. Lane says Europe perceives a double standard in which the United States sweeps Chinese human rights violations under the rug and ask for European help in financing the sale of nuclear reactors to North Korea, yet it calls for the continued dual containment of Iran and Iraq.

What, in fact, the U.S. now seeks of Iran is a relationship which recognizes its own primacy in the region. This is not fair. Otherwise, there is no inherent clash of interests between Iran and the U.S. Its benefits will be felt all over West Asia, concludes Noorani. (IRNA)



MOSCOW, Russian Federation (Dec. 15): Russian Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin makes a point during his speech at the State Duma, the Lower House of Russian Parliament, prior a deputies vote on the revised 1997 state budget. It was the second special conference of deputies on thse State's budget Sunday. Chernomyrdin urged the deputies not to link an adoption of the budget with political issues. (AFP PHOTO)

Besharati: Iran will Defend Its Integrity

TEHRAN — Iran's Minister of the Interior Ali Mohammad Besharati told visiting Deputy Foreign Minister of Kuwait Suleiman Majid al-Shahin here Sunday that if Washington should do anything against Iran, it would have jeopardized the peace at the Persian Gulf and Iranian nation will firmly defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

He said the Islamic Republic is committed to maintaining peace in the Persian Gulf, adding that the presence in the Persian Gulf of foreign forces is the main cause for tension.

Besharati said that Washington created tension in the region in an effort to reap undue benefits for itself, so, he said, the Persian Gulf states should be wary not to fall into the trap of foreign powers.

The Iranian interior minister observed that Iran had a border of more than 2,000 kilometers at the Persian Gulf and that it was ready to protect its own sovereignty.

He said Iran respected the sovereignty of all nations and adhered to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

The visiting deputy foreign minister of Kuwait said that his country considered the Islamic Republic as a good and trustworthy neighbor and believed that Iran would never compromise principles for interim benefits. (IRNA)

Woman Minister in Pakistani Interim Government Resigns

ISLAMABAD — Syeda Abida Husain, minister for science and technology in Pakistan's caretaker government resigned Monday, state-run television reported.

Abida, the lone female member of caretaker Prime Minister Malik Meraj Khalid's cabinet, told reporters that she decided to quit as she wanted to contest the forthcoming elections.

Khalid, who was appointed by President Farooq Ahmed Leghari after sacking Premier Benazir Bhutto on November 5, has said his cabinet members would stay out of the elections scheduled for February 3.

Abida, who belongs to the Pakistan Muslim League Party led by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, said she would seek elecction in order to affirm her commitment to democracy.

Ruling out differences with the interim government she said she had served in many cabinets but this assignment was the proudest one of her political carrier.

Abida, who also served as ambassador to the United States, is to run for the National Assembly from her home constituency of Jhang, in Punjab Province. (AFP)

(Contd from Pg. 12)

FAMILIES...

Cremades was referring to the three official theories to explain why the Paris-bound Boeing exploded and crashed into the Atlantic ocean off the coast of Long Island, New York: a bomb, a missile, or a mechanical malfunction.

But speculation has intensified that a static electricity spark could have ignited fuel vapors in the plane's center wing fuel tank, causing the explosion that investigators said brought the plane down.

NTSB officials are focusing on the possibility that a crack in insulation of a fuel pipe that runs the length of the plane, or a leak in one of the O-rings at a coupling point, could have caused a static charge to build up and then spark.

That spark would have ignited volatile fumes in the almost-empty tank, leading to an explosion that could have caused the crash, which occurred shortly after takeoff.

Lending some credence to this theory, in a package of urgent recommendations to the Federal Aviation Administration released Friday, the NTSB said it had found damage "consistent with an explosion within the (center wing fuel) tank."

In a statement, the NTSB called on the FAA to require airlines to take appropriate operational measures to protect center fuel tanks from heat sources that might create volatile fuel vapors that could cause explosions.

"We emphasize the fact that the investigation is still ongoing ...(there are) no conclusions yet," an NTSB spokesman said.

The recommendations could cost airlines—and ultimately travelers—billions of dollars in new onboard safety systems, experts said.

The FAA urged airlines more than 30 years ago to install the same nitrogen-enriched fuel tanks that the NTSB recommended Friday.

Under the procedure, nonflammable nitrogen gas is pumped into the fuel tanks to keep oxygen and fuel vapors from mixing, a combination that under certain conditions can explode.

But the airlines balked because of the cost—even as military jets adapted the new nitrogen system—and the FAA never followed up, said Arthur Wolk, an aviation lawyer and expert on airplane crashes.

"It is, in my view, another sad example of the FAA knowing about a problem that could cause a catastrophe and bowing to industry pressure," Wolk added. "Every time the FAA does that, there is a loss of life."

Boeing spokesman Doug Webb told AFP Saturday: "It's important to remember these are recommendations only and they do not presume to determine the cause of the accident."

Meanwhile, Cremades said that he learned from Saturday's briefing that the FBI was undertaking missile tests in California as part of an effort to prove or disprove that theory. (AFP)

(Contd from Pg. 7)

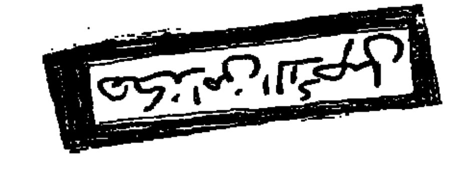
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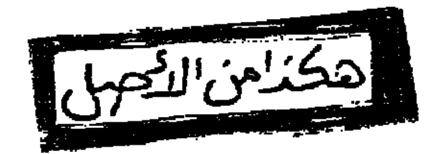
benefits. Steer clear of foods which have the label hydrogenated vegetable oils.

Exposure to heat and light further degrades cooking oil and yet most are displayed in clear containers!

New studies show that increased olive and canola oil consumption is associated with reduced CHD risk. Both are high in monosaturated fats and are much healthier than the polyunsaturated fats found in safflower, corn and vegetable oils.

Moreover, cooking with polyunsaturated oils may damage them even further. Some researchers are even concerned that oils which are heated and reheated (recycled) may become potentially carcinogenic.





Hong Kong Chicken Wings Take Flight

HONG KONG – Hong Kong police Monday were trying to figure out why a hard-working gang of crooks made off with five container-loads of frozen chicken wings from a local wharf.

The haul – hardly the easiest of goods to sell on the black market – was taken late Sunday after the thieves tied up the watchman on a barge, brought up another vessel and transferred the five refrigerated containers onto it.

The wings are worth 2.5 million Hong Kong dollars (nearly) $300,000).

(AFP)

Remains of 27 British Soldiers Killed in WWI Found

ARRAS, France – The remains of 27 soldiers, all believed to be Britons killed in a World War I battle near this northern French city, have been found in a mass grave, the Commonwealth Graves Commission said on Monday.

Bones, boots, buttons, shoulder flashes, pieces of uniform and three dog-tags were found Friday at Monchy-le-Preux during earth-moving work in an industrial development, said Michael Johnson, head of the War Graves Commission based at Beaurains.

The shoulder flashes show the men were from the 13th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, who were pinned down at Monchy-le-Preux by a heavy German bombardment.

(AFP)

Rao Claims Constitutional Immunity in Vote-Buying Case

NEW DELHI – Former Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao Monday claimed constitutional immunity against being put on trial for allegedly buying votes.

Rao stands accused of bribing four opposition members of Parliament to save his government during a no-confidence in 1993.

His counsel argued Rao the first former Indian prime minister to face trial in a criminal case, should not be prosecuted because of constitutional immunity provided for members of Parliament.

R.K Anand, Rao's counsel, told a New Delhi high court that the Indian constitution provided "that any action of the MPs in the house and the cause of the action can not be questioned in the court of law."

Anand said only the Parliament could put Rao on trial.

"Even if a member of the house takes money outside the house to speak or vote in a particular manner in the Parliament, both his acts, taking bribe and voting, are immune from any action in the court," he said.

(AFP)

Aidid Wages War for Medina in Somali Capital

MOGADISHU – Fresh fighting between rival warlords in bullet-riddled Mogadishu killed four people and wounded seven on Monday, witnesses in the Somali capital said.

The clashes were concentrated in south Mogadishu's Medina enclave where Habr Gedir militia led by Hussein Mohamed Aidid tried to oust the Abgal forces of Musse Sudi Yalahow.

The Medina is a strategic location, lying just beside the international airport, unused since UN troops withdrew in March last year because it is within range of the guns of both sides.

Yalahow is fighting with Ali Mahdi Mohamed, who controls a large part of north Mogadishu.

(AFP)

Singapore Parliament Dissolved

SINGAPORE – Singapore's Parliament was dissolved Monday, a government statement said, setting the stage for next general elections.

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong is required to call elections before April 1997, but is widely expected to hold them in the next few weeks. No date has been set.

"The president, on the advice of the prime minister, has dissolved Parliament on Monday," a one-line government statement said. Goh's People's Action Party is widely expected to win the polls, as it has since 1959.

The forthcoming elections will only serve as a barometer of the PAP's popularity amid discontentment against rising costs of living.

The divided opposition controlled only four seats in the 81-member Parliament, formed after elections in 1991.

The PAP controlled 75, and there were two vacancies.

(AP)

French Farmers Destroy Foreign Meat as Police Look on

PARIS – Some 800 French calf producers ransacked five truckloads of foreign meat at Paris's main food market on Monday and destroyed the contents as police looked on, witnesses said.

The farmers, who arrived late Sunday aboard some 20 buses from western and southwestern France, stopped all trucks arriving at the Rungis market just south of the capital to check the contents.

Four trucks from the Netherlands and one from Ireland were emptied and their consignments destroyed. A squad of gendarmes at the scene took no action.

A farmers' delegation later met with a representative of French Agriculture Minister Philippe Vasseur to press their demands as the protestors dispersed.

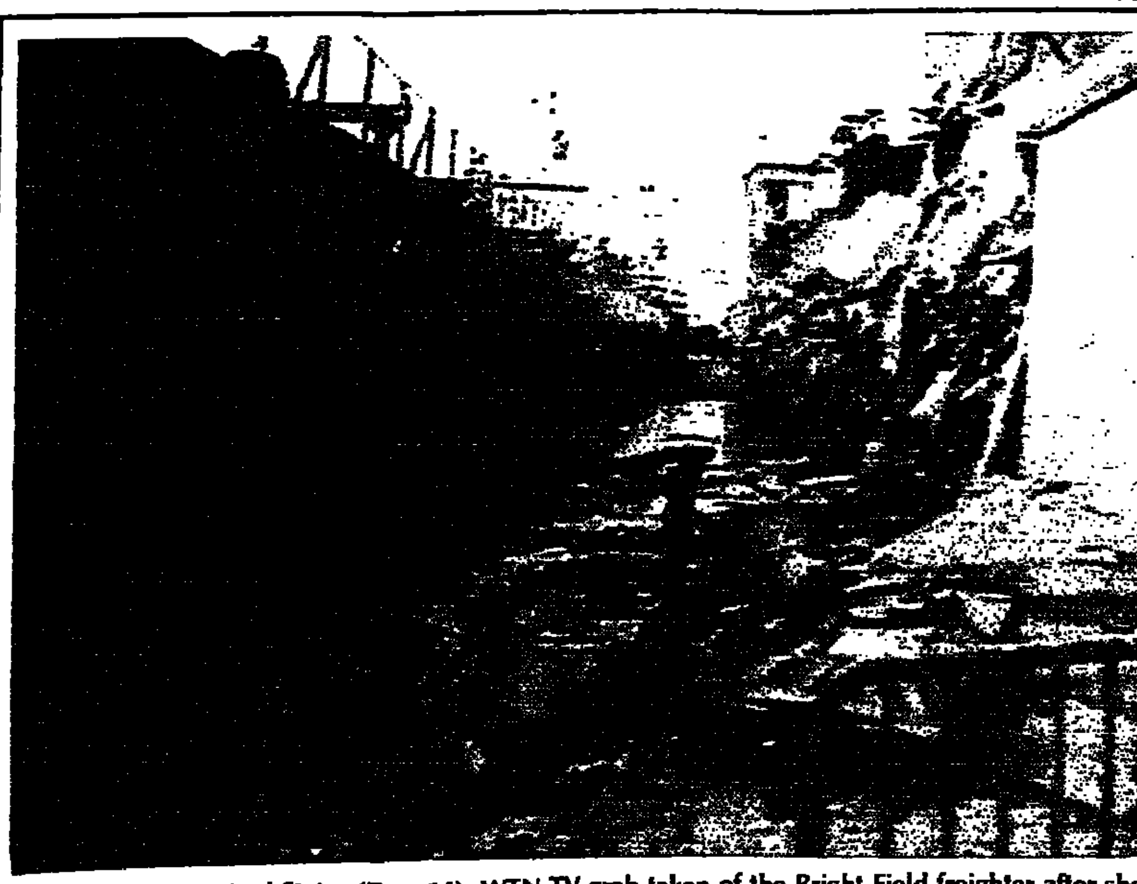
The farmers are protesting at the conditions of payment of European subsidies for the slaughtering of calves, saying that the maximum weight to benefit from a subsidy varies across the European Union, with 108 kilograms per animal in France, compared for example with 135 kilograms in the Netherlands.

(AFP)

Refugees Now Crossing From Tanzania at 8,000 an Hour

KIGALI -- More than 40,000 Rwandan refugees returned to their home country from Tanzania on Monday as an exodus that began in a trickle two days ago grew to a flood, the UN refugee agency said here. By midday, 43,000 had filed across the narrow border bridge at Rusumo, with more arriving at the rate of 10,000 an hour. UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Spokesman Paul Stromberg said here. The number of returns grew as African leaders were due to meet for a regional summit in Nairobi to defuse the crisis in the Great Lakes region that threatens five nations – Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire. At least 25,000 Hutu refugees were reported to have returned from Tanzania on Sunday, while on Saturday the figure had been 5,000, at a maximum rate of just 1,000 an hour.

(AFP)



NEW ORLEANS, United States (Dec. 14): WTN TV grab taken of the Bright Field freighter after she ploughed into a shopping mall on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown New Orleans, Louisiana, injuring at least 60 people. The ship was carried by the current into the embankment after it lost power.

(AFP PHOTO)

South Korean Court Commutes Ex-President's Death Sentence

SEOUL – A South Korean appeal court on Monday commuted the death sentence ordered against former President Chun Doo-Hwan for mutiny and corruption, and reduced the jail term of his successor Roh Tae-Woo.

The verdict, although widely expected, divided the nation. Relatives of some 200 victims of the 1980 Kwangju Massacre screamed "murderers ... this is no trial." The political opposition-reserved judgement and Chun's home province quietly applauded.

Pointing to South Korea's meteoric economic growth and the peaceful transition of power during his presidency, the court said Chun should serve a life jail term.

Roh's sentence was reduced from 22-and-a-half years to 17 years. A Lower Court in August ordered death for Chun after finding him guilty of a 1979 military coup, the Kwangju Massacre and graft charges.

Chun, 65, closed his eyes and gave a hint of a smile. Roh, 64, heaved a deep sigh of relief, and later clasped Chun's hand.

At a separate court session Monday, four tycoons including the head of the giant Daewoo Business Group accused of bribing Roh with millions of dollars walked free.

The court, citing lack of evidence, acquitted Chung Tae-Su, head of the Hanbo Business Group on charges of giving Roh 12 million dollars for favors.

Daewoo Group Chairman Kim Woo-Choong, Choi Won-Suk of Dong-A Group, Jang Jin-Ho of Jinro Group, all had their bribery sentences suspended.

(AFP)



SEOUL, Republic of Korea (Dec. 16): Former South Korean presidents Chun Doo-Hwan (R) and Roh Tae-Woo (L) stand at the bar of the Seoul appellate court with their former army generals (unidentified) at the end of their appeal trial. Chun's death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment and Roh's 22 and a half year prison term to 17 years.

(AFP PHOTO)

Several Government Members Reelected in Gabon

LIBREVILLE – Several members of Gabon's government have been returned to power in general elections, including Prime Minister Paulin Obame Nguema, the state-owned daily *L'union* reported Monday. The paper did not give figures from Sunday's poll, but said that others to win outright in the first round of voting were the ministers of equipment, Zacharie Myboto, petroleum, Paul Toungui, tranport, Antoine Mboumbou Miyakou and agriculture Emmanuel Ondo Methogo.

The Junior Budget Minister, Jean Pingm was also reelected. All these men were candidates of the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG), which had a majority in the outgoing Parliament and was once the sole, ruling party. The paper also reported the reelection of Parliament Speaker Marcel Eloi Rahandi Chambrier, and two former ministers, Jacques Adhiahenot and Ali Bongo, son of president Omar Bongo.

(AFP)

Almost 35,000 Killed Under Buyoya Regime

NAIROBI – The Tutsi regime of Major Pierre Buyoya is responsible for the deaths of 34,515 people since it seized power in Burundi last July, the main Hutu rebel group claimed in a statement on Monday.

The head of the National Council for the Defense of Democracy (NCDD), Leonard Nyangoma, said in a message to regional heads of state and government due to hold a summit here on Monday, that they should maintain sanctions against Buyoya's government.

The countries enforcing a crippling economic embargo should "politically isolate the military junta by refusing its leader, Major Pierre Buyoya, the right to take part in any political forum," said Nyangoma, whose movement has an armed wing active inside Burundi.

Regional leaders and South African President Nelson Mandela were scheduled to meet here to discuss not only Burundi but the ethnic violence and refugee crisis affecting Zaire, Rwanda and other countries of the Great Lakes region.

(AFP)

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

SARAJEVO – A Dutch member of the UN police force in Bosnia was beaten up and threatened at gunpoint by a Serb policeman when he tried to stop him hitting a woman, UN Spokesman Alexander Ivanko said Monday. The UN policeman tried to stop the Serb policeman from beating up a young woman, whose name was not released. "When he interfered, he was kicked and beaten and threatened at gunpoint," Ivanko said.

OSLO - Norwegian Oil and Energy Minister Grete Faremo resigned Monday after criticism that she failed to stop the allegedly illegal activities by the secret services during her time as justice minister.

MEMMINGEN, Germany – A cattle-dealer held responsible for the suffering of cows transported when they were physically unfit for travel was fined 9,000 marks (about 6,000 dollars) for cruelty Monday.

Boeing Buying Mc Donnell Douglas for $13 Billion

WASHINGTON — Boeing Co. jolted the aerospace world Sunday with a $13.3 billion deal to buy McDonnell Douglas Corp., reducing the number of major commercial plane makers in the world from three to two.

The deal announced Sunday is akin to shrinking America's big three automakers to just two.

If approved by federal regulators who enforce antitrust laws, the combined company under Boeing's name anticipates sales of $48 billion next year, the officials said. It would be headquartered in Seattle, where Boeing is based, while St. Louis-based McDonnell Douglas would continue to operate under its own name as a major division of Boeing.

Philip Condit, president and chief executive officer of Boeing, called it "an historic moment in aviation and aerospace."

The new company will be the "largest, strongest, broadest, most admired aerospace corporation in the world and by far the largest U.S. exporter," said John McDonnell, chairman of the board of McDonnell Douglas.

The officials said they anticipated no trouble gaining federal approval for the deal concluded last Tuesday after three years of discussion.

The combined company will have operations across the spectrum of aerospace, from commercial aircraft to military planes to space satellites and launch vehicles.

The workforce will number nearly 200,000, with major operations in 26 states. Although some consolidation of corporate headquarters staff was anticipated, the officials said no major layoffs were expected, at least in the immediate future.

"The greatest strength of this combination is our people," Condit said.

Although the companies characterized it as a merger, the terms clearly show Boeing is buying McDonnell. McDonnell shareholders will receive Boeing stock worth $13.3 billion, McDonnell's operations will be melded into Boeing's, the McDonnell name will not be part of the new company, and the top officer and two-thirds of the board of directors will be Boeing people.

Combining the companies ends the storied life of McDonnell Douglas, maker of the Mercury and Gemini space capsules and once the world's dominant manufacturer of military planes such as the F-4 Phantom.

The company had been struggling in efforts to keep up its commercial aircraft business, hurt by competition from Boeing and Europe's Airbus Industrie Consortium.

For Boeing, the deal solidifies its strength in commercial aircraft, adding the production capacity of McDonnell to help meet strong orders from the world's major airlines.

"The merger enhances our position as the number one aerospace company in the world and truly among the world's premier industrial firms," said Condit, who will be chairman and chief executive officer of the new company.

Major Boeing programs include Boeing 777 and 747 commercial airliners, the F-2 fighter, the AWACS radar plane, the Comanche helicopter and portions of the space shuttle.

(AP)

Duma Budget Committee Recommends Passage of Budget

MOSCOW — The communists, who dominate Russia's lower House of Parliament, agreed to support the latest draft of the 1997 budget on Sunday provided their demands are met.

Valentin Kuptsev, a lawmaker and party leader, said the government must pay all overdue wages 'development' budget to improve Russian industry.
prove Russian industry.

If this is not done, "not only will we not vote for the budget, we will put forward motions on no-confidence in the government and urge actions of civil disobedience," Kuptsev told reporters after a closed-door party meeting Saturday.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin described a budget Saturday night that appeared to meet the communists' demands. He said the spending plan includes a separate development budget of 200 trillion rubles ($36 billion).

"This is tremendous progress," he said on public Russian Television. "Two hundred trillion rubles mean the construction of new enterprises and the use of modern technologies."

Chernomyrdin also said the government plans to clear its debt to pensioners in early 1997. The government has repeatedly promised to pay back wages and pensions, but failed to follow through.

Russia is struggling with huge wage arrears because of a cycle of unpaid debts and taxes. Millions of Russian workers have gone months without beigg paid.

The coal mining union agreed this week to end an eight-day national strike after the government promised to pay back wages by the end of the month, but thousands of miners are still on strike.

The state Duma rejected the government's original version in October and set up a joint parliamentary-executive committee to put together a revised version. It will be presented to parliament on Sunday. A vote is expected.

Parliament's budget committee recommended Saturday that the new draft be adopted, despite opposition from the committee's chairman, Mikhail Zadornov, who has previously said that its revenue projections are unrealistic.

Despite his misgivings, Zadornov said Saturday that he thinks the document has a good chance of passing, since spending is higher than in previous versions.

The government recently inserted 31 trillion rubles ($ 5.6 billion) in new revenue and spending into the budget, not contained in earlier drafts. Officials said details of where that money will come from and how it will be spent will be a key issue in Sunday's discussions.

Zadornov said Chernomyrdin may reshuffle his government to include communists, in exchange for their support on the budget.

Responding to the speculation, Chernomyrdin said only that he had not discussed any cabinet changes with President Boris Yeltsin recently.

Without an approved budget, the law requires the government to operate in the first quarter by extrapolating revenue and spending trends from the fourth quarter of this year.

(AP)

General Motors Set to Launch New Cars in India

BOMBAY — General Motors of the United States plans to launch new cars and a utility vehicle in India, a newspaper reported Monday.

General Motors has a tie up with India's Birla Business House and manufactures the Opel Astra here.

Ronald Nardi, managing director of General Motors India Ltd., was quoted by the *Asian Age* as saying: "We are conducting a feasibility and market study to launch a small car and a big car in the premium range.

"The cars are likely to be launched in 1998," he said.

Nardi was confident that both models — a low-priced car and a diesel car — would do well in the Indian market.

Nardi said the company had so far sold more than 3,000 Opel Astra cars since launching it in June this year and "we plan to sell between 12,500 and 14,500 cars" next year.

No further details were given.

(AFP)

China Said to Earmark 10 Bln U.S. Dollars to Counter HK Crisis

HONG KONG — China has earmarked $10 billion that it can transfer to Hong Kong within 24 hours if the territory runs into any financial crisis after the return to Chinese rule, a newspaper said here Monday.

"If Hong Kong suffers from any financial crisis ... after the 1997 handover, we will not sit idly by," *Ming Pao Daily News* quoted an unnamed high-ranking Chinese official as saying.

"Of our $100-billion foreign exchange reserves, we can marshall $10 billion within 24 hours, which will be good enough to tackle the crisis," the official reportedly said.

He reiterated the Chinese government would not interfere in Hong Kong's financial and monetary affairs after the July 1 handover, in line with the principle of 'one country, two systems' which guides Hong Kong's post-handover autonomy.

The official said a crisis could arise if investors or the public, fearing uncertainty, dumped the Hong Kong dollar in favor of the greenback.

But the risk was not great, he said, adding: "Hong Kong's Financial Administration does not have any worries on this score, as it knows we are right behind it."

China's foreign exchange reserves stood at some $100 billion in November. At the same time, the Chinese foreign debt also reached $110 billion.

(AP)

Japanese Partners Calm at Boeing-McDonnell Merger

TOKYO — Japanese aircraft makers said Monday the planned merger between Boeing Co. and McDonnell Douglas would have little impact on their cooperative relations with Boeing.

"From what we have learned from the announcement, we don't see anything that could affect our ties with Boeing," a spokesman for Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. said.

A spokesman for Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd. said there would be 'no change' in the company's partnership with Boeing.

Five Japanese aircraft makers, including Mitsubishi Heavy and Kawasaki Heavy, have been cooperating with Boeing in developing and manufacturing parts of the Boeing 767 and 777 passenger jets.

The Japanese partners intend to participate in Boeing's plan to develop next-generation large passenger aircraft.

Boeing and McDonnell Douglas announced the merger plan on Sunday in a move to create the world's largest integrated aerospace company.

Japan's International Trade and Industry Ministry said the merger was expected to intensify competition in the industry, *Kyodo News* said.

A ministry official was quoted as saying that Japanese makers would need to focus on small aircraft, in which they are strong, to survive the competition.

(AFP)

Singapore Meeting Sets Stage for Last Lap of Ambitious Telecom Talks

SINGAPORE — Exploratory talks in Singapore have set the stage for the final lap of bargaining in Geneva to clinch a deal in two months to open up the 550 billion dollar global telecommunications business.

World Trade Organization (WTO) Director-General Renato Ruggiero said the Telecoms Services Agreement (TSA) was the next target after a far-reaching impact here to free up trade in computers and related products.

Ruggiero said he was confident a deal to free telecoms would be struck by the February 15 deadline set in April, when negotiators failed to wrap up an agreement after nearly two years of talks.

"I believe we will achieve in February the agreement on telecommunications," Ruggeiro said at the end of the week-long WTO ministerial conference in Singapore Friday, reporting that talks here on the subject had made 'real progress'.

European Union Vice President Sir Leon Brittan echoed that optimism, saying an agreement, scheduled to come into force on January 1, 1998, was 'clearly achievable'.

Brittan said Barbados, Egypt, Jamaica and South Africa announced improved offers to liberalize their telecoms markets, while Indonesia said it was seriously considering making an offer.

Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, South Korea, Poland and Switzerland said they would improve their offers, while Singapore and the Slovak Republic formally improved their proposals.

Malaysia said it was looking at the issue 'in more detail'.

The offers came after U.S. chief negotiator Charlene Barshefsky called a meeting on the sidelines of last week's WTO conference in a bid to revive the Geneva talks and set the ball rolling for a deal by February 15.

The negotiations had to be extended beyond an initial deadline last April when Washington refused to open up its coveted market after being dissatisfied with offers from 52 other countries involved in the talks, notably from Asia.

"At the time... many countries refused to dismantle or discuss dismantling monopoly telecom providers, meaning no effective market access in those countries," Barshefsky said.

"What seems to be happening is that countries are becoming somewhat less enamoured of their monopoly providers — rates are too high, services too slow, inter-connection is difficult, investment moneys are being lost," she said.

Barshefsky said the United States, which has offered complete access to its enormous market, sought 'a critical mass of high-quality offers' to conclude an agreement on telecoms liberalization.

"The United States represents almost one-half of the world telecom revenue. Monopoly practices in most of the rest of the world bar effective access to the other half of the world's telecom revenues," she said.

An Indonesian official retorted that most Asian nations lacked the capital and technology to exploit investment opportunities elsewhere and were therefore hesistant to open up their own telecoms markets.

Barshefsky did not define 'critical mass' or 'high quality', but these relate to the percentage of telecoms business that would be opened up by a Geneva deal, the limits on foreign equity and industry regulation.

Experts say the global telecoms market would almost double to one trillion dollars if it was opened up, resulting in huge savings for businesses and consumers and wider telecoms coverage.

Two-thirds of the world has never made a phone call 150 years after the instrument was invented. Half the world's population lives more than two days' walk from the nearest telephone.

Liberalization could in 10 to 15 years lead to a telephone 'in every small village of the world', WTO Chief Ruggiero said, stressing the 'human dimension' of deregulation.

"This can mean sometimes the difference between life and death," he said.

(AFP)

Governmental Chip Talks Start in Japan

TOKYO — An international meeting on semiconductors opened here Monday in an attempt to coordinate world policy in the sector.

Officials from the European Union (EU), Japan, South Korea and the United States took part in the talks under a new framework that replaced the Japan-U.S. chip accord, government officials said.

They were to exchange views on trends on semi-conductors and policies in individual countries, a Trade Ministry official said.

Topics at the one-day meeting will also include the Information Technology Accord (ITA), reached at the World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meeting in Singapore last week, the official said.

The ITA calls for the removal of all tariffs on information-related products by 2000.

The global governmental forum on semiconductor trade was proposed by Japan during negotiations with the United States this year on a bilateral chip accord that expired at the end of July.

Japan, insisting that a multilateral framework should replace the bilateral accord, proposed the establishment of private-sector and governmental forums to deal with the globalization of the industry.

(AFP)

Japan's Revised Industrial Output Up 3.9 Percent in October

TOKYO — Japan's industrial output in October rose 3.9 percent from September, revised from a preliminary estimate of a 3.5 percent rise, the International Trade and Industry Ministry said Monday.

The upward revision in October was due to a rise in output of steel ships, condensors and other electronic products, which was not included in the preliminary data.

Strong exports to Southeast Asia of condensors and other electronics, due in part to the lower yen, was behind the rise in output, along with a rise in steel ships exports to Panama and the Bahamas, the ministry said.

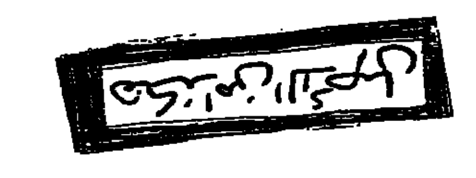
Producer shipments in October rose a revised 3.7 percent from the previous month, with preliminary data having shown a 3.3 percent rise.

Inventories rose 0.7 percent after preliminary data showed a 0.6 percent rise.

In October, the utilisation rate of equipment rose 3.0 percent, with capacity flat, the ministry said.

The ministry forecast falls of 1.7 percent in November and 0.2 percent in December. But for the quarter to December, it expects an increase of 2.9 percent from the previous quarter, and a 4.6 percent rise from a year earlier.

(AFP)



Catholic School Snared in Belgian Child Sex Scandal

BRUSSELS — Belgian outrage over child sex abuse flared again Sunday with disturbing new allegations of pedophilia at a Roman Catholic school in Brussels.

Speaking on RTL-TVI Television, parents of children at Saint Pierre d'Uccle School in the Belgian capital alleged that staff were involved in acts of pedophila three years ago.

"In 1993, my seven-year-old son was taken with other children to an office," one mother said. "There they were forced to take off their clothes in front of one teacher who was naked, a second who watched, a third who held them, a fourth who took photos and a fifth who kept a look out."

The grandfather of another student claimed that a teacher, having taken off his clothes in a classroom, forced his pupils to do the same. He faulted the school and the Belgian judicial authorities of not wanting to get involved in the affair at the time.

School Principal Daniel Pinte did not deny that the incidents happened, but justified his silence at the time by saying that "one is always a bit at a loss in the face of such events."

A lawyer for the parents, Michel Graindorge, accused Brussels prosecutor Benoit Denemeppe of "dramatic errors" and of protecting the school staff by giving them access to files even though they were not being charged.

Belgium has been stunned by revelations of child sex abuse since the arrest of Marc Dutroux, a convicted pedophile, who is now charged with kidnapping six girls between June 1995 and last August.

Two of the girls were later freed, but four others were found dead on property owned by Dutroux near the southern city of Charleroi, amid allegations that the authorities could have done more to stop the crimes.

A dozen disappearances of children since 1985 remain unexplained.

To underscore their concern, nearly 2,000 people held silent protests in the towns of Peruwelz and Hotton, sustaining the outrage expressed on October 20 in a huge "white march" by 325,000 people in Brussels.

Belgian police investigating Dutroux's activities resumed digging Sunday in woodland in southern Belgium, where the suspect may have held other children in a disused mine shaft.

Major Marcel Guissart, head of the team investigating the Dutroux case, said there was a possibility that bodies may be found.

"We are convinced that ... not far from the tunnel in which we have already worked, another gallery is to be found in which we might find clues leading to a hideaway where children may have been sequestered," he said.

Excavation work was launched in October after Dutroux told police to concentrate their efforts there. But a search of the tunnel revealed nothing.

Aftershocks from the Dutroux scandal have reached the highest levels of the government, including accusations -- rejected on Thursday by a parliamentary commission -- that a deputy prime minister was involved.

Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dahaene on Sunday welcomed the decision to clear the deputy premier, Elio di Rupo, of suspicion of pedophilia as he denounced the rumors that sparked the affair.

"The deputy prime minister has been accused of nothing. The chamber (of deputies) stated that the factors under consideration did not include any grounds to send the case to the appeals court ... It is good that it is so," Dehaene told RTBF television in his first comments on the decision.

"I will not allow doubts to be cast on any politician, whoever he may be, on the basis of rumors, and I will support him for as long as he himself considers he is able to work," he added.

Di Rupo had been accused of pe...philia by various witnesses and in various statements, mostly anonymous, but the parliamentary commission cleared him of all suspicion, saying there was "no indication of guilt."

Di Rupo, 45, minister for the economy and telecommunications, is leader of the French-speaking socialist wing within Dahaene's center-left government. (AFP)

Police Take 1,300 Genetic "Fingerprints" to Track Killer

VECHELDE, Germany — Some 1,300 men from Vechelde, a village in northern Germany, were called Saturday to give saliva samples for genetic matching in a bid to find the killer of an 18-year-old girl.

The genetic code in the saliva will be compared with that in a hair that was discovered by the torso of the girl after it was found on a nearby railway line at the beginning of October.

The legs turned up a few weeks later in a lake near Hanover, but the head and arms are still missing.

The head of the inquiry, Rainer Jendesczok, said the results of the tests would not be known for some weeks. (AFP)

Did Diet Drive Gunman to Commit Massacre?

MELBOURNE, Australia — Mass murderer Martin Bryant has refused to say why he shot dead 35 people last April. Now medical researchers are reportedly wondering if his diet was somehow to blame.

The *Sunday Age* newspaper reported that scientists at the Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois have written to Bryant in Gobart's Risdon Prison asking for blood and hair samples to determine if there is a link between nutritional deficiencies and violent behavior.

The laboratory has already conducted similar tests on other mass murderers, including James Huberty the man who killed 21 in a shooting rampage at McDonald's Restaurant in San Diego in 1984.

Some scientists theorize that a poor diet might cause a buildup of toxins, such as cadmium and lead, in the brain, leading to severe mood swings.

The newspaper said a study of 100 violent offenders is to be published soon in the *British Journal of Nutritional Science*.

The Tasmanian Supreme Court sentenced Bryant to 35 terms of life in prison with no chance of parole in November after he pleaded guilty to opening fire of tourists at Port Arthur, a ruined 19th century convict colony, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Hobart.

Australia does not have the death penalty.

Except for telling his defense lawyer in private, Bryant has refused to say what drove him to commit the April 28 massacre.

Evidence presented to the court by psychiatrists suggested that Bryant has limited intelligence and a major personality disorder. (AP)

French Royal Auction Pulls $3 Million

MONACO — The pretender to the throne of France grossed more than 15 million francs (about $3 million) at an auction of his paintings, furniture and other objets d'art held here by the London auctioneers Sotheby's this weekend.

The collection of paintings, furnishings, books, silverware and plate belonging to the Count and Countess of Paris sold for more than two and a half times the original estimated value.

The count is the direct descendant of the last king of France, Louis-Philippe (1830-48). The collection on sale was assembled in a vast 18th century residence near Lisbon which the count and countess occupied between 1945 and 1950.

The auction attracted collectors from all over Europe who engaged in long drawn-out contests for the prized objets d'art, some by long distance on the 16 telephones permanently in use. (AFP)



New Accusations Against Winnie Mandela

JOHANNESBURG -- A life-imprisoned convict has made new accusations against President Nelson Mandela's ex-wife Winnie over her role in the abduction and murder of a teenaged political activist in 1989.

Jerry Richardson, the former captain of a football team associated with (Mrs.) Mandela and jailed in connection with the 1989 murder, told the weekly *City Press* he gave false testimony to protect her.

"I lied to save Winnie Mandela," he said.

Stompie Seipei, 14, a member of the internal wing of (Nelson) Mandela's then-banned African National Congress, was found in January 1989 with his throat cut and multiple evidence of having been tortured.

After a politically sensational trial, Winnie Mandela was convicted of kidnapping and being an accessory to assault and given a six-month prison sentence, which, on appeal, was later converted to a fine.

Richardson said he had written in vain to the truth and reconciliation commission in order to obtain a temporary amnesty and tell his story.



The commission, headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate and Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, has the task of probing gross human rights abuses during the apartheid era.

"I will tell that Winnie ordered the kidnapping and was present for much of the time when he (Stompie) was tortured because she wanted him to confess that he was a sell-out," said Richardson.

Stompie was tortured during four days at Winnie Mandela's home in the black township of Soweto near Johannesburg and his face became so swollen after beatings that he could not talk, Richardson said.

Richardson said one of his colleagues from the football club, who died in 1991, had ordered Stompie's killing.

"We took the bleeding boy to an open veld where I cut his throat with a knife," he said.

"We used a totally wrong strategy to get a confession. We were convinced that he was an informer, it is now that I realize that we did not even have proof of that," said Richardson.

He said his statements could be confirmed by Katiza Cebukhulu, a young man who smuggled out of the country after the affair broke out and has been asking -- so far unsuccessfully — to return to South Africa with proper security guarantees.

Mandela, who divorced from her husband in January, could not be reached for comment.

The commission told city press it was not aware of Richardson's amnesty appeal: "The commission has received more than 4,000 applications so far," a spokesman said. (AFP)

700 Kgs of Hashish Seized

BUDAPEST -- Hungarian customs officers on the Romanian border have seized 700 kilograms (320 pounds) of hashish from a lorry registered in the Netherlands, a customs official said Sunday.

The batch, confiscated at Nagylak, was the biggest seized by Hungarian customs officials this year.

The Dutch lorry was returning from Romania and, according to the driver, transporting glass objects.

The drugs were confiscated and the driver and a passenger, both Dutch nationals, were arrested by Hungarian authorities. (AFP)

Pope Thanks Poles for Christmas Trees



VATICAN CITY — Thanking fellow Poles for the Christmas trees which will decorate his apartment, Pope John Paul II said he hoped to return to the Polish mountain area where he skied in his younger days.

"Zakopane is waiting" for the Pope's return, read a long banner unfurled by the Poles standing in St. Peter's Square for a view of the Pope making his weekly appearance from his studio window.

The visitors, from the ski resort town in the Tatra Mountains in southern Poland, brought Christmas trees which will decorate Vatican offices and the Pope's apartment.

Remarking upon the Zakopane banner, the Pope said, "I hope to come" there but he didn't say when that might be.

Among his 1997 foreign trips is a late spring journey in Poland. The official itinerary has not been announced.

John Paul, a good skier, sometimes slipped away from the Vatican earlier in his papacy to ski in the mountains east of Rome. But health problems, including hip surgery following a fall in his apartment bathroom in 1994, have ended his ski days and sharply curtailed another passion – hiking in the summer.

Earlier in the morning, the Pope visited a Catholic parish in an upper-middle class Rome neighborhood. He looked tired and walked slowly, and his voice sounded hoarse.

But later, at the sight of Roman children in St. Peter's Square, the Pope seemed perkier as he blessed the figures of the infant Jesus they carried from nativity scenes at home.

John Paul wished the crowd a merry Christmas in Italian and Spanish. The 28-meter (90-foot) high Christmas tree that decorates the center of St. Peter's, near a life-sized nativity scene, was donated this year by Slovenia.

The tree is as old as the Pope – 76. (AP)

Dog Tags Recovered by Chinese Verified as Those of U.S. Bomber Crew

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon has verified that five U.S. military dog tags recovered in a mountain ravine in southeastern China match the names of American airmen reported lost on a B-24 bombing mission in 1944, officials said recently.

Chinese President Jiang Zemin turned over photographs of the dog tags, as well as a videotape of the crash site, to U.S. President Bill Clinton when they met in the Philippines last month. Two actual dog tags were presented to U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry when he met his Chinese counterpart at the Pentagon this week.

Chinese officials said they had recovered an unspecified number of human remains at the bottom of a deep ravine north of Guilin in Guangxi Province on China's southern coast bordering Vietnam. They also collected small pieces of the World War II aircraft, as well as the dog tags and crew items such as a canteen.

U.S. officials plan to fly to Beijing later this month to take possession of the human remains at a military ceremony. Forensic anthropologists will attempt to determine their identities. A U.S. search team also will visit the remote crash site, probably early in 1997, to try to find and recover more remains.

Larry Greer, a spokesman for the defense POW-MIA Office, said officials had located the original army report of the lost aircraft and verified the five names.

Greer said the identities of the five dog tags would not be publicly confirmed until the families are notified. He said two families already have been notified. He would not say which two.

The 1944 War Department report said the B-24 bomber, with a crew of 10 aboard, took off at 4:30 p.m. on August 31, 1944, from a 14th Air Force Base at Liuchow, China. As part of the 375th Bomb Squadron, the plane bombed Japanese ships in Takao Harbor in Formosa (now Taiwan) and was returning to Liuchow when it disappeared.

The U.S. army air force had several bases in China from which U.S. planes attacked Japanese forces.

Greer said the B-24 crashed into the side of a 6,000-foot (1,828 meters) mountain and tumbled into a deep ravine. He said China had not explained how – or when – it happened to find the crash site, which Greer said is in an extremely remote area.

A crew member of another bomber on the same mission, Captain Elmer E. Haynes, wrote in a diary that his plane was within 40 miles (64 kilometers) of the Liuchow home base on its return trip when it was diverted to another airfield. Liuchow was under air attack. The weather turned bad and his plane had to circle the mountainous area for hours until daybreak when the crew could see well enough to land.

The pilot of the lost B-24 was 2nd Lt. George H. Pierpont and the co-pilot was 2nd Lt. Franklin A. Tomenendale, according to army records. The navigator was 2nd Lt. Robert L. Deming, the bombardier was 2nd Lt. George A. Ward, and the engineer was staff Sgt. Anthony W. Delucia.

The radio operator was Sgt. Ellsworth V. Kelley, and the radar observer was Pfc. Fred P. Buckley. The three gunners were staff Sgt. William A. Drager, Sgt. Robert L. Kearsey, and Pvt. Vincent J. Netherwood. (AP)



U.S. Patients Dictate End of Life Medical Care

CHICAGO — Documenting a patient's wishes on use of advanced medical care in hopeless cases has some popularity in the United States, but not in Germany or Japan, according to a recent report.

About 30% of American patients had advance directives, but fewer than one percent of German and Japanese patients had them, the journal of the *American Medical Association* reported citing a survey by Dr. Ashwini Sehgal of the Metrohealth Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio.

He and colleagues polled 232 American, German and Japanese kidney specialists on the use of advance directives — the term used to alert family and medical professionals about one's wishes for end-of-life medical care — among their dialysis patients.

The researchers studied dialysis — the artificial cleansing of blood by a machine used when kidneys fail — because withdrawal from the treatment is the third most common cause of death among dialysis patients.

"Dialysis is most often withdrawn when new medical complications occur or when patients simply become so tired of treatment that death is preferable to ongoing dialysis," the authors wrote.

"Patients are frequently mentally incompetent at the time decisions about withdrawal are made. An examination of 155 cases of withdrawal found that half of the patients were mentally incompetent at the time the decision to withdraw was made.

"As a result, the formulation and use of advance directives have been encouraged by ethicists, courts and legislators," the authors said.

American, German and Japanese kidney specialists reported withdrawing dialysis for 5.1%, 1.6% and 0.7% of their patients last year respectively, the study reported.

Researchers said there are several possible explanations for the variation.

The explanations include: Recall bias during the questioning — physicians may have forgotten; patient factors — dialysis patients in Germany and Japan tend to be younger and have fewer additional diseases than U.S. patients; and cultural and legal factors.

(AFP)

Rotavirus Vaccine

A common illness that causes fever, vomiting and diarrhea — sending approximately 70,000 children to hospitals each year and causing some 100 deaths in the United States — could be prevented by vaccination, according to researchers in a multicenter trial that included the University of Maryland Schools of Medicine, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

In a study of 1278 infants, some were given one of two vaccines against the rotavirus that causes the disease, while others got a placebo. "Both vaccines significantly reduced the incidence of rotavirus gastroenterities," says the report — and with few adverse reactions. Researchers say that "the rotavirus vaccine must be incorporated into the schedule of standard childhood immunizations for administration to be practical and cost-effective."

Footnote

Most of the 54,000 lower-extremity amputations performed each year on diabetics could be prevented by inexpensive testing with a device called a monofilament. The 1 1/2-inch-long nylon bristle attached to a four-inch plastic handle gauges the sensation of pressure at each of ten points on the foot. If loss of protective sensation is detected early, measures to avoid amputation are needed, including selection of proper footwear, regular foot inspection, and diligent care of dry skin, calluses and long toenails. According to Dr. Ciro V. Sumaya, head of the Health Resources and Services Administration, widespread implementation of these efforts could reduce the number of diabetic limb amputations by 75 percent or more.

Perils of Piercing

Growing numbers of patients are seeking treatment for problems associated with body piercing. Says Dr. J. Regan Thomas, president of the Amercian Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery: "We're seeing more men of all ages having their ears pierced. And men and women continue to add multiple holes to their ears — and noses." With these trends, Thomas says, comes an increase in potentially serious complications.

The most common problem is tearing that leads to a complete split in the ear lobe — which can occur when an earing catches on a hairbrush, for example, or is pulled during exercise. Repairing a split usually requires plastic surgery. Another complication is the risk of infection and deformity caused by piercing cartilage rather than soft tissue. Cartilage is found along the outside edge near the top of the ear — a common spot for multiple piercing — and in portions of the nose.

To minimize risks, facial surgeons suggest these tips: have piercing done by a health-care professional-lack of a sterile technique creates the potential for the spread of infectious diseases such as hepatitis and AIDS; avoid piercing cartilage; use minimal jewerlry on babies and children, who are at risk for tearing the pierced skin. If complications develop, see a doctor. Swelling 24 to 48 hours after the procedure or failure of the wound to heal can signal an infection.

Scientists Say Fatness Pill Is in Sight

WASHINGTON — Scientists reported recently that they were closing in on a way to regulate body fat without resorting to diets.

The answer may be finding out how to control a protein known as *ob*, or leptin, that is at the heart of how much people eat, they told a conference of neurological experts.

Leptin is secreted from fat cells and acts as sort of a communication link to the brain as it regulates feeding behavior, metabolism and the energy levels in rodents, primates and humans.

In papers presented at a conference of the society for neuroscience, scientists said that new research reveals specific steps on how leptin functions, knowledge that could lead to drugs that would curb obesity.

Each advance in our understanding (of leptin) brings us closer to the development of an effective and safe drug that will increase sensitivity of the brain of obese individuals to leptin, Arthur Campfield, a scientist at the drug firm Hoffman-la Roche, said at a conference on leptin.

These therapeutic agents should reduce body fat and then chronically maintain a lower amount of body fat and promote health, he said.

Campfield and scientists at Millennium Pharmaceuticals Inc, led by Louis Tartaglia, isolated the receptor for leptin in mice and identified the equivalent in the human brain. They explained that the receptor is the doorway through which leptin acts on the brain.

Campfield said that other researchers at Rockefeller University led by Streamson Chua have found that leptin levels are much higher in obese rats than in thin rats.

Chua told the conference that these new studies support the idea that many of the actions of leptin are mediated by brain mechanisms that may be altered in obese individuals.

(Reuter)

The Best Diet to Lower Your Cholesterol Level

There are three types of fats:

Saturated fats raise cholesterol levels and are found in whole milk, cheese and red meat (beef, mutton and pork).

Monosaturated fats bring down LDL levels and are found in olive, peanut and canola oil. These are as rich in calories as other fats and should be consumed in moderation.

Polyunsaturated fats are the best kind and are found in vegetables and white meat (fish and chicken). These bring down blood cholesterol levels, though not as effectively as monosaturated fats. These cannot be synthesized by the body and must be supplied through the diet.

The Best Cooking Oil

Most of the cooking oils commercially available are extracted using solvents, a process which destroys much of the product's health

(Contd on Pg. 15)

THOUGHT

One who leads people to do good is like one who does it.

(The Holy Prophet Mohammad (S))

PRAYER

Noon 12:01
Evening 17:15
Dawn (tomorrow) 05:30
Sunrise (tomorrow) 07:09

TODAY IN HISTORY

1922 - Last British troops leave Irish free state.

1939 - German battleship graft speed is scuttled off Uruguay to prevent it from falling into British hands in World War II.

1941 - Japanese troops begin invasion of north Borneo in World War II.

1977 - Egypt's President Anwar Sadat tells Israeli Parliament in Jerusalem that Egypt seeks peace with justice.

1980 - A special tribunal in China begins the two-month trial of "the Gang of Four." lead by Jiang Qing, chairman Mao Tse-Tung's wife, for masterminding the 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution.

1987 - Investigating police say arson is unlikely in London subway fire that took 30 lives.

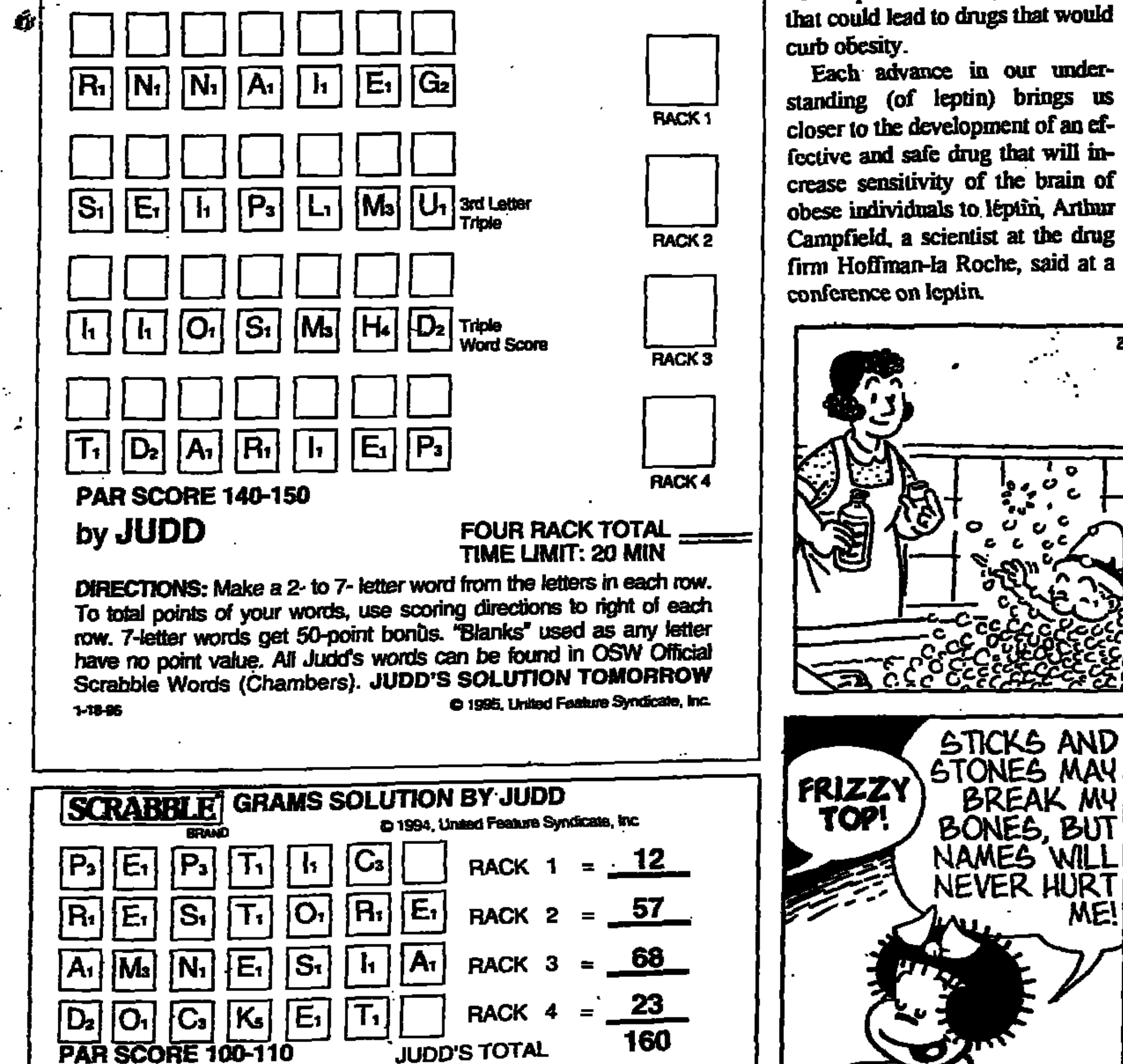
Kazakh Doctor Arrested in S. Korea

SEOUL — Police have arrested a Kazakh doctor trying to take one kg (2.2 pounds) of heroin out of the country, in South Korea's biggest heroin bust which police linked to the Russian Mafia, news reports said recently.

Victor Kim, head physician for Kazakhstan's national weightlifting team, was arrested at Kimpo International Airport, when the drug was found taped to the back of a money belt, Yonhap news agency said.

He had apparently brought the heroin into the country last week but failed to connect with buyers here, and was trying to smuggle it out again, the agency said, quoting police as putting the street value of the haul at five million dollars.

(AFP)

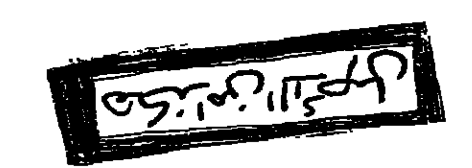












IN THE NAME OF ALLAH

TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY OF IRAN
NO. 5, BISIM BLDG., DR. ALI SHARIATI AVE.
TEHRAN-IRAN

EXTENSION OF THE CLOSING DATE (TENDER NO. 75.13)

IN ORDER TO PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE TO THE BIDDERS, TCI HEREBY EXTENDS THE CLOSING DATE OF THE ABOVE MENTIONED TENDER AS FOLLOWS:

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ENVELOPES WILL BE 8.10.75 (DEC. 28, 1996).

THE OPENING DATE OF ENVELOPES WILL BE AT 10 AM ON 9.10.75 (DEC. 29. 1996). OBVIOUSLY THE OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE TENDER REMAIN UNCHANGED.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY OF IRAN
DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR
FINANCE, PROCUREMENT, AND MANPOWER

Standard Bearer of Construction, President Rafsanjani - Inaugurated:

Shahdnab Yasouj Mfg. Company

Managing Director of Shahdnab Yasouj Company, Engineer Hossein Rowqani, briefed the *Tehran Times* about this newly inaugurated modern food manufacturing company in an exclusive interview yesterday.

"We hope the esteemed Islamic Republic government would continue its valuable support of our firm until we reach our final goal which is expansion of the factory and export of our products to all the interested foreign buyers."

"Shahdnab Yasouj Company, which was recently inaugurated by President Rafsanjani in Yasouj city of Kohkilouyeh and Boyer Ahmad Province on a 24,000 square meter land is a private share company.

"The roofed area of the factory is 3,500 square meters vast and one of our primary goals is to support the apple and grapes gardeners of the region," said Rowqani.

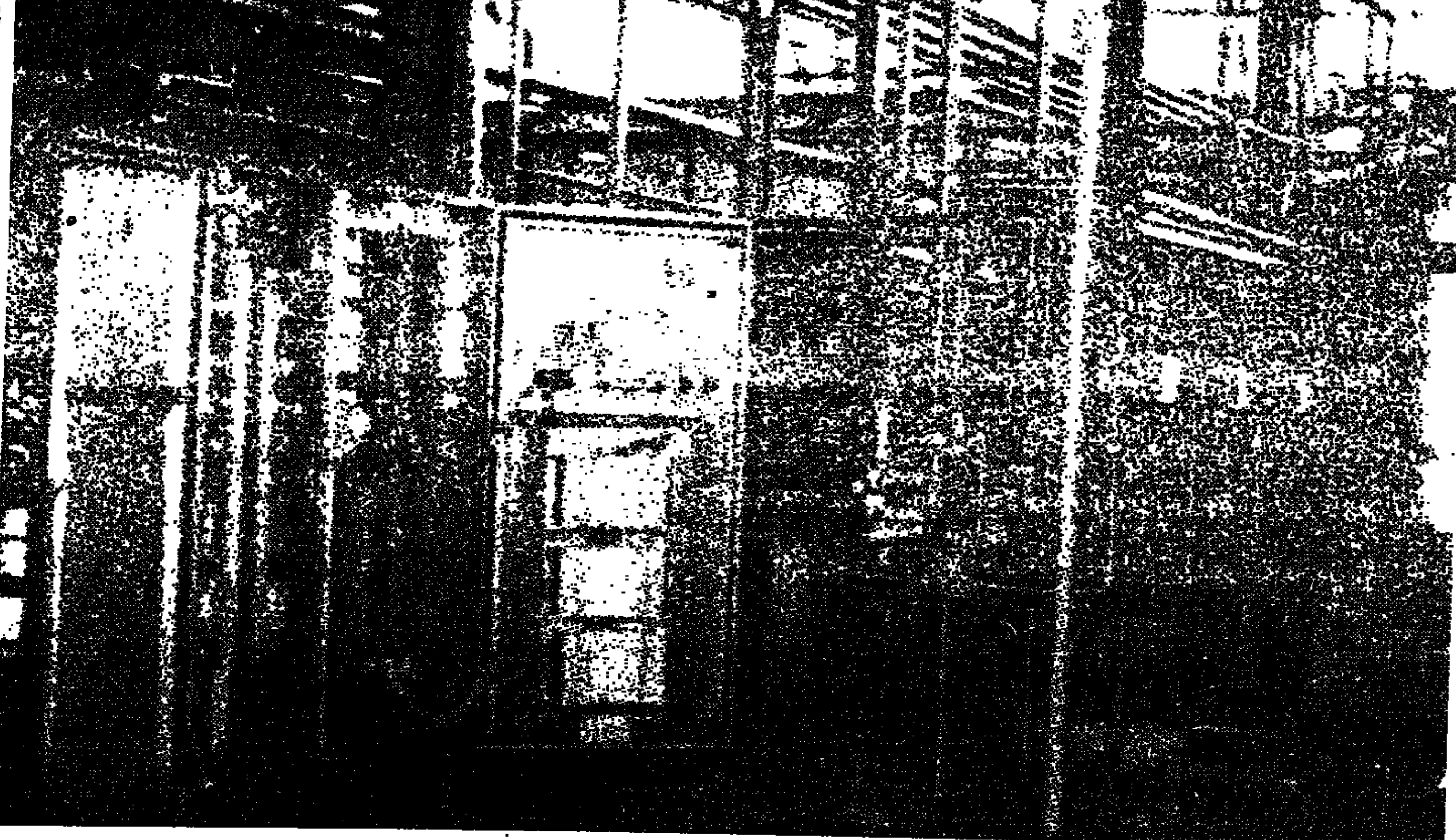
Answering a question about the annual capacity of the factory he said, "We can produce 3,000 tons of concentrated fruit juice and 2,000 tons of fresh fruit juice each season.

He then talked about the assets of the company.

"The share holders and the Saderat Bank of Iran have invested five billion rials and $4,200,000 on this project."

Shahdnab Yasouj Company will be able to export both concentrated and fresh fruit juice upon foreign companies' request and considering the supreme quality of the product and the fine quality of the Tetrapack packages the management of the **Shahdnab Yasouj company** hopes to reach that goal in near future.

Asked about the expectations of the Shahdnab **Yasouj Company** from the government, Engineer Rowqani first thanked the Ministry of Industries and the Saderat Bank of Iran for their profound support of the firm so far. "We hope the esteemed Islamic Republic government would continue its valuable support of our firm until we reach our final goal which is expansion of the factory and export of our products to all the interested foreign buyers." The company can export concentrated fruit juice in 200 kilogram plastic cans according to the managing director.





"We can produce 3,000 tons of concentrated fruit juice and 2,000 tons of fresh fruit juice each season."

Shahdnab Yasouj Company will be able to export both concentrated and fresh fruit juice upon foreign companies' request.

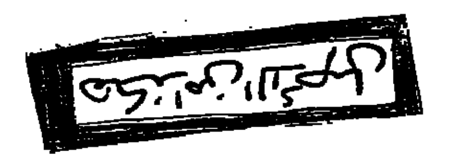
Talking about the future plans of the company for expansion of the factory Engineer Rowqani expressed hope that **Shahdnab Yasouj Company** will construct a factory for manufacturing packing machines for the fruit juice companies. with further support of the Ministry of Industries and the Saderat Bank of Iran.

At the end, Engineer Rowqani expressed his gratitude for the effrots of the all-Iranian crew, who

We hope to be able to take a long stride ahead toward industrial self-sufficiency with inauguration of Shahdnab Yasouj Company.

worked hard to complete the various parts of the Shahdnab Yasouj factory.

"They were qualifed experts from the Iran Tetrapack Company, Ghahremany Brothers Company, Fazcar Techno-Engineering Company, Mobaddel Tank Company and other Iranian individual experts and engineers to all of whom we are deeply indebted."



A Dance of Joy to End a Harrowing Year in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG — As a harrowing year that saw them finally get to grips with their apartheid past drew to a close, South Africans were at least given one upbeat image to carry into 1997: their president dancing for joy.

The moment that prompted Nelson Mandela's exuberance was the completion of the country's final hard political bargaining, compromise and soul- searching.

Regarded as one of the most liberal in the world, the constitution entrenches a democratic order and a comprehensive bill of rights and safeguards against arbitrary state action.

Like the constitutional settlement that resulted in all-race elections in April 1994, the process also widened political rifts and changed the political landscape.

As a harrowing year that saw them finally get to grips with their apartheid past drew to a close, South Africans were at least given one upbeat image to carry into 1997: their president dancing for joy.

constitution, a document that once and for all consigns apartheid to the scrapheap and secures democracy in the once racially divided land.

The basic law, which comes into effect the moment the bells begin chiming in the New Year, was the product of more than two years of

The Zulu Nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party snubbed the talks claiming its archrival, Mandela's African National Congress, was too centralist; Frederik de Klerk's conservative National Party quit Mandela's national unity government to become the main opposition party.

But, with the democratic battle finally won, Mandela on December 10 signed the new constitution into law, using a single pen stroke to put the seal on what has been hailed as a modern-day miracle.

South Africans will go bouncing into 1997 knowing that their hard-won democracy is as firmly entrenched and irreversible as the process of lancing the boil of the country's murky past.

The method chosen by chief surgeon Mandela for the painful but unavoidable procedure is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which, under the leadership of Nobel peace laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, began its work in April.

The body, charged with probing human rights abuses during the apartheid era, has as its main functions the hearing out of stories of victims and their families and the granting of amnesty to perpetrators who make full confessions and prove their deeds were political.

When it began its work, the truth body was dubbed the "tears commission" because of the number of weeping victims or relatives who lined up with horrific tales of torture, abuse, humiliation and devastation at the hands of the apartheid authorities.

In recent weeks, however, perpetrators have begun coming forward to make their confessions and plead for forgiveness.

Some of their tales have been downright chilling, others have simply seared the soul.

Policemen told how they kidnapped anti-apartheid activists, beat them to a pulp, shot them, blew them up, made them beg for mercy and killed them anyway, electrocuted them, suffocated them, strangled them, crushed their skulls.

Mothers wept, wives wailed, children were been stunned into silence as they listened to the final hours of their loved ones being recounted.

And the nation recoiled in horror at the barbarities carried out in their midst — apparently without their knowledge — only to watch perpetrators being granted amnesty and walking free.

There has been anger and bitterness, but also forgiveness and mercy.

Slowly and painfully, the nation has begun to reach towards the reconciliation that Mandela personifies — and preaches daily.

But while the president may have achieved reconciliation at a national level, on his own home front he failed to save his marriage to wife Winnie and in March he stood before a supreme court judge — and the nation — to bare his soul and win a divorce.

The personal loneliness he admitted to in court, however, has since been eased by a love affair with Graca Machel, widow of Mozambican President Samora Machel, who was killed in a plane crash 10 years ago.

The implication was that the image to carry into 1997 was a tossup between a country in flames on one hand and, on the other, a people making their peace with each other while their president danced for the sheer joy of a new start in life and in love.

Mother wept, wives wailed, children were being stunned into silence as they listened to the final hours of their loved ones being recounted.

South Africans in general support the romance and hope it will blossom, in the same way most also want reconciliation and healing to continue to take root at a national level.

To those would prefer to see justice and vengeance as opposed to the truth and reconciliation process, Tutu responds that the commission was a vital key to the political settlement.

"If we had no negotiated settlement, this country would be up in flames," he said this week.

The implication was that the image to carry into 1997 was a tossup between a country in flames on one hand and, on the other, a people making their peace with each other while their president danced for the sheer joy of a new start in life and in love.

(AFP)

French Polynesian University to Be Earthquake Study Center

PAPEETE — A giant laser and a satellite station will be installed next year on the campus of French Polynesia's University Center to aid studies aimed at forecasting earthquakes, university officials said Sunday.

The installation on the campus in Papeete's suburbs will include four measurement systems, with the laser and its satellite system to study movement of the earth's tectonic plates.

The earth's rotation, gravity, magnetic field and the topography of the ocean floor will also be studied.

The project will cost more than 44 million francs ($8.5 million), with three quarters of the funding coming from the United States' National Aeronautic and Space Administration.

Others involved in the project include France's National Space Study Center, the European Space Agency and France's National Center for Scientific Research of the South Pacific.

A similar project was undertaken in 1994 on the Island of Huahine but was ended because of lack of funds. Officials said the new project was made possible by the international cooperation.

(AFP)

Sony Develops Quadruple-Density Mini Disk

TOKYO — Japanese consumer electronics giant Sony Corp. said Monday it had developed a high capacity, high speed data storage medium.

Sony said in a statement the "quadruple density MD" had storage capacity of 650 megabytes.

Sony said its audio minidisk (MD) format introduced in November 1992 had won wide market acceptance in Japan "due to its high-quality digital sound and quick random access."

A document storage format with 140 megabytes capacity, MD Data, was introduced in July 1993 and quadruple density MD is an advancement on that with 4.6 times the original capacity, Sony said.

By reducing the wavelength of the recording and playback laser, and applying laser strobe magnetic field modulation technology and high density magnetic film technology, among others, Sony said the same 650 megabytes of information stored on a CD-ROM could now be stored on a compact MD, allowing the recording and playback of still and moving images.

Sony said it hoped to propose a format for the new technology in early 1997 and, with co-developer Sharp Corp., would approach other companies in the industry to have the technology adopted.

(AFP)

Primitive and Modern Humans May Have Been Neighbors

WASHINGTON — Beetle-browed, humanlike creatures may have been neighbors with anatomically modern humans in Java as recently as 27,000 years ago, researchers say. Their study suggests the primitive species lived on the Pacific island almost a million years after it died out in Africa.

Using new techniques to age-date fossils found on Java, a team of anthropologists concluded that a primitive species known as homo erectus lived in Java between 27,000 to 53,000 years ago.

Carl C. Swisher III of the Berkeley Geochronology Center said this new date indicates that homo erectus lived in Java at the same time that homo sapiens, the modern human, was also there.

"These are the youngest dates ever found for homo erectus and it is quite startling," said Susan Anton, a University of Florida anthropologist and co-author of the study. "This is the first time that they have been shown to coexist. Even in Africa, they didn't overlap."

A report on the study will be published Friday in the journal *Science*.

Most experts believe homo erectus arose in Africa about 1.8 million years ago and then spread throughout Asia. Anton said it is widely believed that homo sapiens evolved in Africa, perhaps from homo erectus, about 200,000 years ago and then spread into the rest of the world.

Homo erectus disappeared from Africa and Asia, but Java "was sort of a refuge" for the species, said Swisher.

Java was once connected with Asia by a land bridge, he said, but when the sea level rose, it became an island, trapping and isolating the primitive humans.

Swisher said the erectus have never been shown to have developed water transportation. But the more advanced sapien built boats and probably arrived in Java about 40,000 years ago.

This means that sapien and erectus hominids shared that island for hundreds of generations, said Anton, and suggests that the arrival of modern humans led to the demise of the primitive forms.

"I find it hard to imagine that there wasn't some effect from a new hominid moving in," she said. There's no strong evidence that warfare wiped out the homo erectus, said Anton. It is more likely, she said, that homo sapiens simply out-competed their primitive relatives, producing more children and learning to live more successfully.

Philip Rightmire of the State University of New York, Binghamton, said the fossils used in the study by Swisher and Anton "are pretty convincing". But, she said, there may be some "technical issues to sort out" about the age-dating.

"The results are intriguing," said Rightmire, an anthropolgy professor. "We need to think about what this means."

But Milford Wolpoff of the University of Michigan said he doubts that the fossils are actually homo erectus, noting that they are very similar to Australian natives, and believes the dates are "unreliable".

Swisher said the find threatens the "regional continuity" theory, supported by Wolpoff, that holds that primitive humans arose in Africa, migrated elsewhere and that modern humans arose from these separate groups. A key part of the theory is that the Java people were the ancestors of modern Australians.

Wolpoff said the Swisher study has not disproven the Java-Australia connection.

Swisher says the coexistence in Java of both homo erectus and homo sapiens supports the "out of Africa" theory that all human species arose at different times in Africa and migrated in waves separated by hundreds of thousands of years.

The Java homo erectus fossils, mostly skull fragments, were found on a terraced bank of the Solo River in Java.

Officials in Java will not permit chips of the fossils to be used for age-dating so the researchers instead dated water buffalo teeth dug from the same site.

The buffalo teeth were age-dated using two techniques, uranium decay and electron spin resonance, which measures electric charges added to tooth enamel by natural radioactivity over time. The work was performed at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

Wolpoff said the buffalo teeth may have come from a different deposit and age than the human fossils, making the dates unreliable.

Homo erectus was similar to modern humans, but had a flat skull, a sloping forehead and a dental bridge that thrust forward. The brow ridge was very large, as if casting a shadow over the eyes. Swisher said the erectus bones were dense and strong, and some of the individuals were five and half feet tall.

"They were stocky and very powerfully built individuals," said Swisher.

But the key difference between erectus and sapien was in the brain. The sapien brain was about 25 percent larger and this may have been the difference between the survival of one species and the demise of the other.

(AP)

India on Renaming Spree to Shed Colonial Legacy

NEW DELHI — If Hindu nationalists have their way, "India" and "New Delhi" would be relegated to history like Bombay and Madras, which have reverted to their traditional names after more than two centuries.

The capital's Hindu nationalist administration wants the name of New Delhi changed to old-time "Dilli" while a Hindu MP has urged the government to rename India as "Bharat" — its ancient name.

The proposal to "Indianize" the bustling capital follows the recent renaming of Bombay, India's financial and film capital now known as Mumbai, and the southern city of Madras which is now called Chennai.

New Delhi's best known shopping complex, Connaught Place and Connaught Circus, were earlier renamed after former prime ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.

A landmark railway station in Bombay had its name dating back to the British Raj changed last year after a Hindu warrior king who is an idol for Hindu militants ruling the city.

Critics say the proposal to do away with "New Delhi" is a political ploy.

"The more it changes the more it is the same thing," said Saifuddin Chaudhury, a respected Communist member of Parliament.

"It does not mean a thing to anybody. I am not personally against changes if the new name has a nice ring to it. Chennai is okay, but who in the world would know or like Mumbai?

"I think everyone is trying to make a point as we approach 50 years of independence or trying to appease a section of the population," he said.

Since India gained independence from British rule in 1947, scores of towns and streets in the country have been "Indianized", frequently causing confusion to visitors.

Some places, however, are still popular by their old names.

The only exception to the current trend is Calcutta, which was India's capital until 1911 and whose Municipal Commissioner Ashim Barman has sparked controversy by suggesting that a few old British names be brought back.

The proposal to "Indianize" the bustling capital follows the recent renaming of Bombay, India's financial and film capital now known as Mumbai, and the southern city of Madras which is now called Chennai.

If Burman has his way, the heart of the Marxist-ruled city would be called Dalhousie Square in memory of Lord Dalhousie who ruled India between 1848 and 1856.

Ho Chi Minh Street would go back to being Harrington Street while three arterial avenues would also be renamed.

Dalhousie Square faces the government headquarters at the Writer's Building, which retains its name as the seat of power of the British East India Company. Junior clerks employed in the company were called Writers.

But Burman's suggestion, ahead of British Prime Minister John Major's visit to Calcutta early next year, is seen by some as a ploy to woo British investment.

(AFP)

Secretive Selection Process for UN Chief Queried

UNITED NATIONS — Ghana's Kofi Annan is to be appointed to a five-year term as the next UN chief, capping a secretive selection process compared to that of choosing a pope.

Some are questioning whether the closed-door process, in which the 15-member UN Security Council recommends its choice to the 185-nation General Assembly for election, is the best way of selecting the world's top diplomat.

"No organization would dream of appointing their chief executive officer in this way," says Sir Brian Urquhart, a British former UN under-secretary-general who coauthored a book calling for a reform of the system.

Britain's Ambassador Sir John Weston, who stresses that the council "did very well this time" in choosing Annan after only four days of informal voting, told AFP that "in due course, in the process of UN reform, this particular question should not be exempted" from consideration.

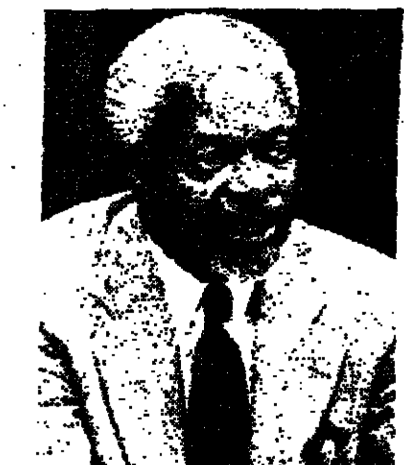
Annan, UN undersecretary-general for peacekeeping, is to be confirmed by the General Assembly.

A U.S. official pointed out that Washington had argued since June, when it publicly dropped support for UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, that names of candidates should be aired to produce the best possible choice. "But others resisted," he noted.

He added that the selection process "is not described in any document, and when it comes down to the matter you have to deal with the people, the personalities and the structure that's there."

French diplomats said that because of the highly political nature of the selection process, in which the five UN Security Council members have veto power over candidates, it was purely academic to consider any change in the system soon.

The five permanent members



are Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

Diplomats also say that it would be difficult to set up a "search committee" for candidates who would be openly challenging an incumbent who might be seeking a second or even third term.

The selection process last week gave rise to chaotic scenes outside the UN Security Council, whose members officially refused to provide details of the informal voting in order to preserve the "dignity" of the four African candidates sponsored by their governments.

Security Council President Paolo Fulci restricted himself to saying "there is no white smoke," as if he were describing the election of a pope in his native Italy after emerging from each day of informal "straw polls" held since Tuesday.

But it was an open secret that in the "straw polls" France was casting negative votes against Annan, considered to be the U.S. candidate, while Britain and the United States were voting against the three others from francophone Africa perceived to have French backing.

The "denouement" came on Friday, the day after Annan built up an unassailable 14 votes in favor with one vote against, when France signaled in closed session that it would rally to support the Ghanaian. A closed formal vote was then held in which Annan was acclaimed as the council's choice.

Urquhart recommends a single seven-year term which would free the incumbent from reelection stresses and pressures.

He says that the successful candidate should be independent, resistant to pressure, demonstrating integrity, a willingness to delegate and a sense of humor.

But he admits that a UN chief would run into difficulties if considered too independent, notably with regard to the main UN contributor, the United States.

Security Council members should "think about what they really want, that is do they want the best person for the job. I'm not convinced that they do," he says.

(AFP)

Defense Ministers Sign UN Crisis Force Pact

FAABORG, Denmark — Defense ministers from Canada and six European nations signed an agreement to create a UN rapid deployment force, the Danish Defense Ministry said.

The UN Standby Forces High Readiness Brigade, or SHIRBRIG, is to be able to spring into action within 15 to 30 days in hot spots at the behest of the United Nations to prevent a crisis from spinning out of control.

It was founded at Faaborg, on the Danish Island of Fyn, by ministers from Austria, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Sweden. Finnish and Irish defense ministers attended as observers.

"Africa will probably be the next continent for the introduction of a rapid intervention brigade to maintain peace under UN auspices," said Danish Defense Minister Hans Hackkerup.

"We hope to be able to increase the number of countries in the brigade, and Finland and Ireland would appear to be at the top of the list," he added.

Danish General Finn Saermark-Thomsen was named to command the 4,000-strong brigade, which should be operational from 1999 with headquarters in Denmark and units based in the countries which have signed up as contributors.

(AFP)

Foreign Tourist Arrivals in Indonesia Up 18 Percent

JAKARTA — The number of foreign tourists arriving in Indonesia between January and October rose 18 percent from the same period in 1995 to 3.43 million, a report said.

Minister for Tourism, Post and Telecommunications Joop Ave said tourists spent more than $3.4 billion during the same period, a 19.4 percent increase compared to last year, the *Jakarta Post* said.

"I'm sure the total foreign exchange earned from the tourist sector will rank second after oil and gas exports," Ave said at the opening of a new hotel on the resort Island of Bali.

He estimated between 4.7 million and five million tourists would visit Indonesia this year, spending at least $6.4 billion.

The total number of foreign visitors to Indonesia increased from 4.01 million in 1994 to 4.3 million in 1995, while the revenue from those visitors grew from $4.7 billion to $5.2 billion, according to government figures.

(AFP)

Jakarta Hails New UN Secretary-General

JAKARTA — Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas welcomed the selection of new UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, and expressed hopes he would be sensitive to the needs of developing countries.

"Indonesia welcomes the election of Kofi Annan ... he is a very qualified individual," Alatas told journalists after meeting President Suharto.

But he added that Indonesia hopes Annan "would show sensitivity and a deep and sensitive knowledge of the problems faced by developing countries."

He also hoped that Annan will continue to support tripartite dialog between Indonesia and Portugal, under the auspices of the UN secretary general, to seek a settlement in the former Portuguese colony of East Timor. (AFP)

Croat Refugees From Serbia Resettle Former Serb-Held Croatian Province

KISTANJE, Croatia — Croats are resettling the area held for four years by Croatian Serbs as the self-proclaimed Republic of Krajina before they were driven out by Zagreb's forces.

Ironically, the new arrivals are Croats who formerly lived in Serbia's Province of Kosovo before they were forced to leave in 1991 after a crackdown by the authorities in Belgrade.

The small town of Kistanje, in the Dalmatian Hinterland between Sibenik and Knin, is considered to be the birthplace of the idea of a Republic of Krajina, when local Serbs rebelled against Croatia's secession from Yugoslavia.

The town is now deserted following the flight of 180,000 Serbs into neighboring Bosnia or Serbia proper in the face of the Croatian army's lighting offensive last year.

The thousands of Croat refugees Zagreb hoped would fill the vaccuum spontaneously failed to materialize, and Kistanje is at the heart of a pilot scheme designed to encourage repopulation of the area, which has become virtually a wasteland.

Candidates for resettlement include Croatian citizens with particular expertise to aid development and reconstruction, or those who lack empoloyment and housing.

Others are Croats living abroad, and finally those who are refugees from Serbia and Montenegro, the two federal states that remain in Yugoslavia, or from the war between Muslims, Croats and Serbs that wracked Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In Kistanje the authorities have stepped up efforts to make the 194 houses habitable before Christmas, including laying on electric power and telephone services, at an estimated cost of $35 million.

The aim is to have more than 1,000 Croats from Kosovo, at present housed in difficult conditions in Zagreb, moved in by January 1.

Employment for several hundred people will be provided by the rehabilitation of local metalworks.

The first of the new arrivals seemed suspicious of journalists, unwilling to call Kistanje home, and fearful that the original Serb occupants will one day return.

In another twist, the only man willing to speak freely is 90-year-old Drago Novakovic, the only Serb who did not flee when the Croatian troops arrived.

Asked how he thinks he will get on with his new neighbors, he said: "Where else would I go? I don't want to leave my home. I was born and live in Croatia, that's where I want to stay."

(AFP)

Rwandan Refugees Return in Their Thousands From Tanzania

KIBUNGO, Rwanda — About 24,000 Rwandan refugees returned home from Tanzania and more were filing over the border every minute, the UN refugee agency said.

The hourly rate of returning refugees mounted as the day wore on, and by nightfall showed no signs of diminishing, officials told AFP in this nearby town.

As the refugees, balancing their meager possessions -- clothes, blankets, pots and pans -- trooped over the narrow bridge, a man with a megaphone told them not to be afraid.

The refugees appeared more tired than afraid, visibly exhausted after several hours of marching, and Rwandan Red Cross officials helped the weakest, carrying the baggage of children.

Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu in a country which has a Hutu majority but a Tutsi-led government, went to the Rusumo border post to watch the repatriation process for himself.

Some came on bicycles overladen with belongings, and sometimes with children, while mothers carried babies on their backs.

Many of the refugees were taken by truck to reception centers near their regions of origin.

The UN high commissioner for refugees said the Rwandan refugees were filing past at a rate of some 5,000 per hour by the end of the afternoon.

Earlier, the rate of movement had been set at about 1,000 an hour. UNHCR spokesman Paul Stromberg, speaking from Rusumo, said returnees were moving in "a more or less compact group -- it's a steady flow."

The flow had increased steadily: "First it was 1,000 an hour, then 3,000, now 5,000," Stromberg said.

He said the returns were far less than had been hoped for by aid agencies and the Tanzanian government, which wants all refugees repatriated by the end of the year.

Some 350,000 of the more than 500,000 refugees in Tanzania fled their camps on Thursday and Friday, fearing forcible repatriation, and started heading for Malawi and Kenya, but troops and police turned most of them round.

A UN World Food Program (WFP) spokesman in Kigali told AFP earlier that Rwandan authorities had pushed international relief agencies 15 kilometers (nine miles) back from the border with Tanzania as the refugees continued to return home.

"The Rwandan authorities want to organize this themselves," Zlatan Milisic said, adding that the Rwandan Red Cross was the only agency operating at the border.

He said some 5,000 refugees had returned on Saturday.

WFP Nairobi spokeswoman Michele Quintaglie said that about 100,000 were still south of the camps in the Ngara region, however, and heading deeper into Tanzania.

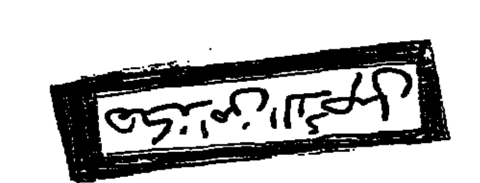
The move out of the camps followed an announcement by Tanzania's government that all the refugees should return home by the end of the month.

Many of those who fled the camps said they feared revenge by the victorious Tutsis for the massacre during Rwanda's civil war of 1994 of more than 500,000 men, women and children by Hutu extremists, but those returning said they were glad to be back.

More than 500,000 refugees fled to Tanzania in 1994 and another 1,200,000 to eastern Zaire. Half of the latter group have returned after Zairean Tutsi rebels began battling Zairean government troops two months ago, conquering a 500-kilometer (300-mile) swathe of territory along the borders with Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda.

The other refugees, hardliners among them, have fled deeper into Zaire.

(AFP)



Kwangju Victims Protest Reprieve for Chun Doo-Hwan

SEOUL — Relatives of the victims of the Kwangju massacre screamed abuse as former President Chun Doo-Hwan was reprieved from the death sentence. "Murderer, death to the mass murderer, this is no trial" sobbing relatives screamed at the bus that carried the balding, bespectacled Chun back to prison, witnesses reported.

An appeal court minutes earlier had found chun, 65, guilty as charged for a 1979 coup and a massacre in the southern city of Kwangju in which some 200 died by official count but it commuted his death sentence to life jail. Chun was also found guilty of massive corruption charges, as was his former military classmate and successor as head of state. Roh Tae-Woo, whose sentence of 22 and a half years was reduced to 17 years.

As the decision was read out in court, Chun lifted his eyes and gave a slight smile. Roh, seated in prison blue on the wooden bench beside him, heaved a sigh of relief.

However it was not clear whether the ruling was any more than a reprieve for the general-turned-president in the bitter drama since he was jailed a year ago with the blessing of president Kim Young-Sam. Prosecutors said they had not yet decided whether to appeal to the supreme court — a process that could drag on until April 1997. It was Chun's decision in 1987 in the face of nationwide protests to step down and hold the first direct presidential elections — which Kim Young Sam won — that was cited by the appellate court in saving Chun from the gallows.

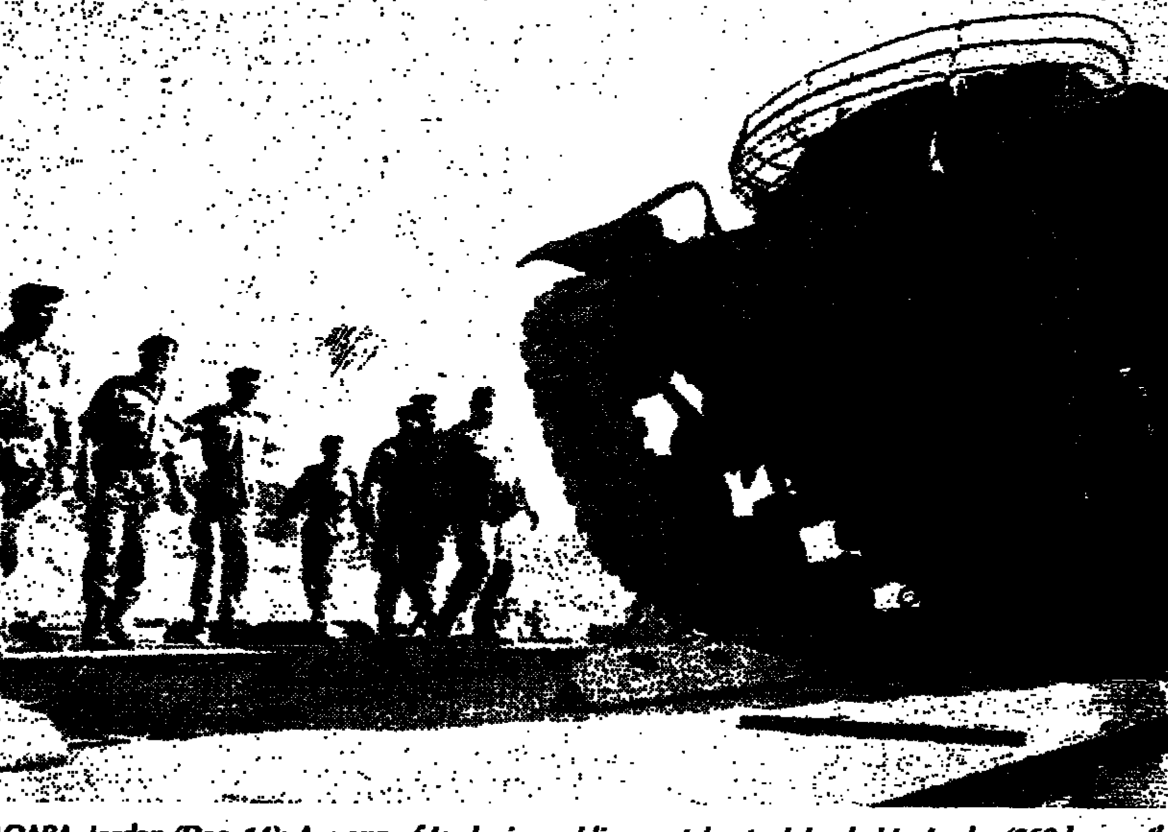
The judges also cited the one-time farm boy's contribution to the economy during his term of office from 1980 to 1988, which capped a 25-year military career which included stints on the front line and in Vietnam. Born in 1931, the second son of a farmer, Chun left school with hopes of becoming an engineer before the Korean war diverted him into the fledgling Korean military academy. It was at the academy that he met fellow-plotter Roh Tae-Woo, the classmate that he named as his successor when he stepped down in 1988. Chun's entry into politics came in the vacuum following the 1979 assassination of President Park Chung-Hee. Chun arrested the then martial law commander in a move now described as a mutiny.

Chun installed himself as the leader of a civilian-military junta and allegedly supervised the crushing of the popular civilian rebellion in Kwangju.

Announcing a "national purification" campaign, he ordered the firing of thousands of dissident civil servants and hundreds of outspoken journalists.

Leading opposition politicians, including Kim Young-Sam, were barred from politics and opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung was jailed.

In 1987 protestors took to the streets en masse, prompting Roh, Chun's designated successor, to agree to popular elections which Roh won in December 1987 with 36.6 percent of the vote over a divided opposition. Chun retired to his private home in western Seoul, before being driven into two years internal exile with his wife in a remote Buddhist monastery. But on his return to Seoul, the Kwangju massacre and the 1979 coup continued to haunt him, as month after month student demonstrators faced tear gas to try to storm his and Roh's homes. Then last year — after more than two years of urging South Korans to leave the judgement of Chun and Roh to history — Kim Young-Sam, backed the passage of a special law to indict them 16 years after the coup. Chun said of that decision: "If you, who joined forces with my party to win the 1993 elections, now call my party treasonous - then you too are treasonous." (AFP)



AQABA, Jordan (Dec. 14): A group of Jordanian soldiers watch a tank loaded in Aqaba (360 km south of Amman). Jordan received 100 million dollars worth of military equipment from the United States which has classified Amman a major ally of the U.S. in the Middle East. (AFP PHOTO)

Pentagon Reviews Defense Strategies, Resources

WASHINGTON — Top Pentagon officials announced last week they had begun a large-scale review of long-term strategies and forces, including whether they can afford to plan to fight two major wars at nearly the same time.

Outgoing Defense Secretary William Perry said the study—known as the quadrennial defense review—will come up with a blueprint that "distills the thinking of the department on resources, requirements, and how they are connected."

The study also will assess the threats the nation faces, how America's military can respond to those threats, and "how do we pay for it," Perry said.

"There are still debates as to whether two major regional conflicts is the proper way of stating the needs" of the Armed Forces, and that "not everyone has agreed" with how the Defense Department has allocated its resources to meet those needs, Perry said.

Deputy Defense Secretary John White, also appearing at the Pentagon briefing, said the study will use the constraints of flat budgets into the coming decade, or about $250bn annually, plus increases for inflation.

Asked whether that means getting rid of high-cost weapons or the two-war strategy, White replied the study "is going to look at everything, and then we're going to decide what fits and what doesn't...there will have to be some choices made."

The study was requested by Congress as the third in a series of reviews on what forces are necessary to maintain the nation's defenses in the post-Cold War world. Others were conducted under Gen. Colin Powell and former Defense Secretary Les Aspin in the early 1990s.

The two-war strategy emerged from the study under President Bush and is supposed to envision conflicts breaking out in the Middle East or the Far East at about the same time, and how the U.S. military would be forced to deal with both conflicts.

The major issues to be reviewed in the new study include strategy, how the force is structured, modernization of weaponry, support infrastructure and bases, the readiness of the forces and personnel.

The study is to be completed by May. However, Congress has also established an independent panel to review the Pentagon's findings, which will work well into the end of 1997.

White said nine members of the panel have yet to be nominated, but it should be in place by the end of the year. (AP)

Families of TWA Flight 800 Victims to Press for Compensation

WASHINGTON — Family members of the victims of TWA Flight 800 said they got little new information about the cause of the crash from investigators, but said they would meet today with TWA to press for compensation from the airline.

"We learned little," said Jose Cremades, head of the group called "Victims of Flight 800," after emerging from a closed-door briefing by the National Transportation Safety Board Saturday.

Later, after a private meeting among the families, Cremades said they had decided to seek compensation from TWA.

Cremades said the families would approach TWA "in a business-like manner" and ask the airline to "meet its obligations and address the needs" of the victims' families. The deaths caused by the TWA crash have left some of the families without their principal source of income.

Cremades said the families would seek compensation under the Warsaw Convention, which he said provides for compensation regardless of the airline's liability. The compensation would amount to $75,000 for each victim.

"TWA can gain goodwill through implementing" the compensation, he added. The money would be an "advance toward any future claims of compensation...not a final settlement."

French, Spanish, Italian and American families and friends of nearly 200 of the 230 people who died in the July 17 crash met at the State Department with NTSB Vice-chairman Robert Francis, a leading investigator in the case.

Cremades said, "The key issues to which we wanted to find answers have not been answered now," adding that "the three possibilities (for the crash) are still being considered."

(Contd on Pg. 15)

Russia Just a Heartbeat From Turmoil in 1996

MOSCOW — The inner workings of the Kremlin and Boris Yeltsin's heart came under intense scrutiny in 1996 as the truth about both trickled out, and the fate of Russia appeared to hang on the health of its leader as never before.

Yeltsin's re-election triumph despite a life-threatening heart problem delighted western leaders and confounded his critics, many of whom had virtually written off his political future a year ago.

The victory confirmed his ability to sense the public mood and reinvent himself accordingly. The vote, giving Yeltsin a new four-year mandate, was hailed as a watershed in the development of Russia's fledgling democracy, with international observers praising the authorities' organization of the polling, though complaining of a strongly pro-Yeltsin bias in the media.

Fears of an anti-Western backlash and possible return to the cold war if communist challenger Gennady Zyuganov won were dispelled by Yeltsin's convincing second-round victory.

In a glitzy but gruelling multi-million-dollar campaign, Yeltsin stole Zyuganov's thunder, making generous pledges of federal funds and drawing voters away from the communists with dire warnings against a return to the Gulag.

Not even the brief detention of two Yeltsin campaign aides, accused of carrying 538,000 dollars out of the government building in a box, could halt the presidential steamroller.

Many Russians breathed a sigh of relief when Yeltsin accepted a truce in Chechnya, signed on August 31. It ended 21 months of war which had claimed up to 100,000 lives, most of them civilians.

A fragile peace came only after a final humiliation for the demoralized, poorly-led Russian forces — the daring seizure of Grozny by battle-hardened Chechen separatist guerrillas.

Fears of destabilising political change resurfaced with Yeltsin's sudden disappearance from the public eye in late June and his announcement later that he would undergo heart surgery.

The Kremlin covered up the fact that Yeltsin had suffered another heart attack — his third in 15 months — just before the July 3 second round runoff against Zyuganov.

But his quintuple heart bypass operation, finally carried out on November 5 by Russian cardiologist Renat Akchurin and his team, prompted unprecedented Kremlin transparency.

Detailed, regular medical reports on Yeltsin's health were provided before and after the surgery, not least because of the presence of pioneering us heart specialist Michael Debakey, acting as a consultant.

As Yeltsin recovered, allegations of scandal and corruption in the Kremlin refused to go away, though none of the charges appeared to stick.

The appointment of controversial financier Boris Berezovsky to a senior security post in October, with special responsibility for reconstruction in Chechnya, stunned reformists and conservatives alike.

The millionaire car dealer and media mogul later revealed that he had joined forces with six business rivals before the elections to engineer Yeltsin's victory, using former privatization chief Anatoly Chubais as their point-man.

Chubais was appointed presidential chief of staff after masterminding Yeltsin's re-election campaign, and was the key figure behind the June ouster of shadowy Kremlin chief bodyguard Alexander Korzhakov.

Apart from Berezovsky, the so-called group of seven includes powerful financiers such as most bank chairman Vladimir Gusinsky and Uneximbank chief Vladimir Potanin, who was later appointed first deputy prime minister.

Berezovsky said that between them they represented 50 percent of Russia's economy.

Chubais and his big business allies were alarmed not only by the communist challenge, but also by the political ambitions of general Alexander Lebed, the popular ex-paratrooper co-opted by Yeltsin before the election runoff against Zyuganov.

After securing the peace deal in Chechnya, Lebed, an abrasive law-and-order nationalist, fell foul of Yeltsin's team and was ousted in October.

According to Sergei Markov, a political analyst at the Carnegie endowment in Moscow, "the bureaucratic-financial oligarchy is becoming more entrenched around Chubais, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov."

Andrei Piontkovsky, head of the Moscow Center for Strategic Studies, said Russia "is witnessing a complete merger of power and property."

"The process bodes ill, because there is no incentive for the ruling elite to invest in production, and the trend deepens the divisions in society, big business has not just bought the politicians — businessmen have become politicians."

Meanwhile, the communists "are integrating into the power structure, and are courting Chernomyrdin to form a consensus," Piontkovsky told AFP. (AFP)

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